

THE ART OF ILLUSTRATION

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THE ART OF ILLUSTRATION

BY
EDMUND J. SULLIVAN

ILLUSTRATED



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INTRODUCTION

IT is not generally till a book is finished that the author finds out what he wants to say—yet reading through what I have written, I find a certain drift which it may be as well to point out and summarize, as though I had been aiming all the time at a foregone conclusion.

The book has been written with no foregone conclusion, but in addition to technical notes, contains some examination of what is expressible in terms of pictorial art loosely summed up under the heading of "Illustration."

In view of all the possibilities as well as the performances of modern process reproduction, I have found it hardly necessary, except in such technical notes as I have given, to refer to Book Illustration as a special form of applied art. What is of interest is the question of the content of Art.

To my regret I have never seen anything but reproductions of Michael Angelo's frescos in the Sistine Chapel—but my regret is qualified by the belief that as decoration they can be nothing but a stupendous misconception—and that Whistler, with a choice of two or three simple tones, and the disposal of a restful pattern, would have produced an effect infinitely more pleasant to the æsthetic sense if that alone is to be considered. Michael Angelo demands of the spectator a concentrated optical and mental attention under the most uncomfortable physical conditions ; and for a

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full appreciation of the work it would, I imagine, be necessary to lie on one's back with a pair of field glasses, in an attitude not far removed from that of the deer stalker in the Highlands—or to develop a most elastic “rubber neck.”

Yet, even if Whistler's draughtsmanship had been on a level with that of Michael Angelo, none would say that he was the greater artist—for while Whistler displays a delicacy of perception and a perfection of taste, he yet, with all his distinction, remains a pigmy beside a giant. Why should this be, unless for the discrepancy between the richness of the intellectual content of the art of one and the thinness of texture of the other?

It seems to have been Whistler's aim to divorce art from life, except in so far as life presented itself to him in the shape of optical phenomena—and not only to specialize art, but to concentrate attention solely upon it, rather than to look upon art as a possible vehicle for the expression of the entire content of the mind. In that, while other artists had endeavoured to extend the boundaries of expression in accordance with the extension of the confines of thought, he aimed at exclusiveness rather than inclusiveness, he was reactionary and conservative rather than radical and revolutionist. His protest, both in practice and propaganda, was directed against the excesses of the time in which an inappropriate sentimental or anecdotic interest had come to outweigh pictorial beauty and an appreciation of the medium of expression. In order to make this protest in favour of an æsthetic of the eye more effective, he went as far as he could to eliminate

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the expression of all but such sensation as can be aroused by physical vision and its immediate action on the mind.

G. F. Watts, noble designer as he was, with, for the present time a somewhat *démodé* grandeur of pictorial conception that will yet come back to its full appreciation, did on occasion fall out of bed on the other side.

The present tendency is to endeavour to enlarge the scope or at least change the method of expression, rather to the neglect of what may be expressed—to create a new and unfamiliar language in order to make a re-statement of old and familiar facts. Yet why invent a new language to tell us that a body is solid, if it is a fact we already knew ? It only adds a new voice to Babel, and gets no nearer the truth. What is of interest is the character the solid body is possessed of—the spiritual essence as well as the form it inhabits, and the impact the whole complex solid makes upon the whole complex mind, and not only upon, or by, the retina. The means of expression of the physical response have been exploited beyond the responses of the spirit. Is the artist alone to disregard the greater part of his own reaction ?

All means of expression should be explored—but it is not words only, nor even a mellifluous flow of them, that make poetry—and an æsthetic that in its aim at a simple and finite perfection would exclude even a hint of the infinite, restful as such an art may be, may after a short contemplation increase the fretfulness it was intended to allay. Art can produce an anodyne for the pain of living—but the production of an anodyne is not the whole aim of art. Art contains, or must be

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made to contain, means for the expression of the whole of life, and life at its most vivid.

It is not only from the study of optics, the rhythm of flat pattern, or the presentation of objects in their three dimensions of length, breadth, and depth, all of which have been pursued with something approaching a feverish despair of art inseparable from any entirely materialistic view, so much as from a reconsideration of the possible content of art that the great advance, if ever there is to be one, is to be hoped for.

Art is a sacrament—and answers to the old definition “an outward and visible sign of inward spiritual grace.” It cannot be limited to the outward sign, no matter how exquisite the sign or the ritual may be. The inward grace is the matter that has been neglected in the recent pursuit.

Art speaks a universal language. Has it no more to say ?

NOTE AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

THE Illustrations have been arranged roughly in chronological order, each artist's work together; a method which it is thought, in spite of certain drawbacks and incongruities inevitably arising, will provide the most useful and convenient form of reference.

The author and publishers wish to express their indebtedness to the courtesy of those gentlemen without whose kind permission it would not have been possible to include the many copyright works appearing in this volume :—

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Mr. Austin Dobson for his book plate by E. A. Abbey.

The Beardsley drawings are reproduced by special arrangement with Mr. John Lane.

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CHAPTER I

THE ART OF ILLUSTRATION

NOW that mechanical and photographic means of reproduction make it possible for an illustrator to employ practically any graphic means he may prefer, from a full-bodied oil colour to the most delicate pencil point, it is hardly necessary to limit our consideration in speaking of "Illustration" in general to any particular medium—and an Academy picture will serve as readily for an example as the cartoon in this week's *Punch*. Michael Angelo's Sistine Chapel frescos are magnificent illustrations; it is even probable that his preoccupation with their subject matter interfered with their decorative function. His desire to produce a microcosm of his thought led him to pack the walls beyond their capacity as though in a book his drawings had run into the margin.

Rhythm pursued for its own sake will lead to excess and weakness, unless stiffened with at least an infusion of character and thought, and will arrive at a meaningless banality—as in the exercise of making Latin nonsense verses where words are used solely for rhythm regardless of meaning. "Content" on the other hand may land its pursuer into a formless ejaculatory catalogue without coherence, as it did with Walt Whitman. The two must be brought into harmonious relation to evolve a work of art—until one can hardly be said to exist without the other, as though

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they had been worked up together into an indissoluble paste.

The use of the word "Illustration" calls immediately for the consideration of what is the content proper



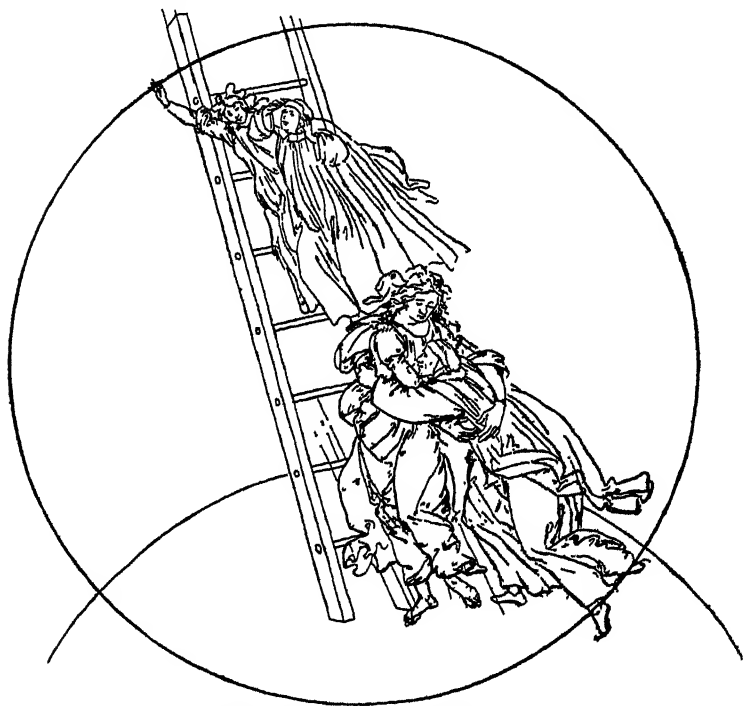
No. 1. Botticelli. Illustration to Dante. Pen drawing.

to pictorial art—presuming Art to contain anything but itself—of what means it has at its disposal, and what these are best fitted to express.

Since among the greatest artists of all time have been many who have been but ill content with the realization of Beauty alone, but have charged their art

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with a burden of fact, story, symbol or idea, the carrying of which in many cases has been the first motive impelling them to expression in graphic or plastic form, it might seem hardly necessary to defend the



No. 2. Botticelli. Illustration to Dante. Pen drawing.

position of the illustrator to-day. But there has been of late years a tendency to explore anew the purposes and possibilities of art; and some endeavour to re-cast art itself in accordance with new conceptions and the changing requirements of the times—even with a fear that art itself is already exhausted, and that nothing but repetition is possible.

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The craftsman's skill in producing a likeness of an external object true in form, colour, and tone, no longer satisfies the more intelligent portion of the public ; and among artists themselves there has been much ferment and searching of heart. In London the exhibitions of the International Society, the life-work of Whistler (who had remained till his death something of a mystery to the public), the vogue of Beardsley, followed some years later by the Post-Impressionists, Futurists, and Cubists, has had the effect at least of widening the horizon of a public that had looked upon the National Gallery as a museum of curiosities of a dead Art, and the Academy as representative of modern and living truth and idealism. The Academy walls had for long taken the place of a huge story annual or " summer number " illustrated in colours—a seasonal gratification in which the content, paltry as it generally was, had become all important and art negligible. The " æsthetic movement " of the eighties had had a certain effect ; but the excesses into which it was carried had discredited the use even of the words " æsthetics " and " æstheticism," as though these belonged exclusively to that taste in " dirty greens " and the false mediævalism which Gilbert had so delightfully ridiculed in "Patience." Professors of " High Art " turned to Greece, Rome or Pompeii for their subject matter—and Leighton's suave grace and Alma Tadema's marbles were regarded as " classic " because the figures introduced were clothed in chiton and peplum instead of the fashions of the period. Mode of expression meant nothing. Most of the " subject " painters of the time were inclined to look away from the life surrounding them to other

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periods and other places ; or if they looked at it at all it was with a view to extracting from it some forced situation of family affection or distress, or of some other anecdotic interest. " Once bitten twice shy " (a picture of a dog and a little girl with a mustard pot) had been a great popular success ; but this style of picture culminated in the still remembered tableau vivant of the " Doctor " by Luke Fildes.

The quality of presentation had come hardly to matter so long as an appeal could be made to the love of an idealized feminine grace, sentiment or dramatic situation. Distinction of vision, of æsthetic expression, of artistic selection in form, colour and tone—" style " in short, was at a discount as of no interest. This requires training for its full enjoyment—whereas the story interest and the love of pretty things and people, is open to the lowest intelligence.

In so far as style was depressed in favour of the content, or because indeed the content had become its sole *raison d'être*—a natural reaction set in, and " subject painting " fell into a well-merited disrepute. Old formulæ of picture making were discarded ; artists turned to the science of vision ; there was great talk of " values," of open air painting and so on, in the pursuit at least of truth to observed Nature—ending in a more or less photographic and dull result—and since simple " truth to Nature " is always bound to lead to this point it became and still is necessary to pause now and again to examine the artistic map in order to set out with some idea of the road to go in order to get to the desirable end.

CHAPTER II

WHISTLER ON THE CONTENT OF ART

IT may be thought that Whistler, in a very effective defence of some of his own work, has disposed of any claim that Illustration might make for inclusion among the arts, except as a hanger on. The following is an extract from the *Gentle Art of Making Enemies*, pp. 126-128 :

“ My picture of a ‘ Harmony in Grey and Gold ’ is an illustration of my meaning—a snow scene with a single black figure and a lighted tavern. I care nothing for the past, present or future of the black figure, placed there because the black was wanted at that spot. All that I know is that my combination of grey and gold is the basis of the picture. Now this is precisely what my friends cannot grasp. They say, ‘ Why not call it ‘ Trotty Veck,’ and sell it for a round harmony of golden guineas ? ’ naively acknowledging that, without baptism there is no market. But even commercially this stocking of your shop with the goods of another would be indecent—custom alone has made it dignified. Not even the popularity of Dickens should be invoked to lend an adventitious aid to art of another kind from his. I should hold it a vulgar and meretricious trick to excite people about Trotty Veck when, if they really could care for pictorial art at all, they would know that the picture should have its own merit, and not depend upon dramatic or legendary or local

WHISTLER ON THE CONTENT OF ART

interest. As music is the poetry of sound, so is painting the poetry of sight, and the subject matter has nothing to do with harmony of sound or of colour.*

“ Art should be independent of all clap-trap—should stand alone, and appeal to the artistic sense of eye or ear, without confounding this with emotions entirely foreign to it, as devotion, pity, love, patriotism, and the like. All these have no kind of concern with it, and that is why I insist on calling my works ‘ arrangements ’ and ‘ harmonies. ’ ”

“ The imitator is a poor kind of creature. If the man who paints only the tree or flower or other surface he sees before him were an artist, the king of artists would be the photographer. It is for the artist to do something beyond this ; in portrait painting to put on canvas something more than the face the model wears for that one day—in short, to paint the man as well as his features ; in arrangement of colours to treat a flower as his key, not as his model.”

A too ready or too full acceptance of this doctrine would dismiss and put out of court off-hand almost the whole of our subject. But neither the opinion nor the subject is dismissible.

* It is probable that there is some analysable correspondence between the rhythm of line and of melody ; as there appears to be between the vibrations of colour, of sound, and of scent. The volatility of scent being slow or rapid produces the equivalent of treble or bass. These vibrations travelling at different rates their impact on the sense may harmonize or be discordant. Mr. William Webb, an old friend of Whistler's, has told me that he matched a slate grey by a note in the scale, and that Whistler agreed with him as to their correspondence. In Piesse's learned book on perfumes a complete scale of scents is given in correspondence with the notes of the piano. If this is accurate it should follow that it is possible to match scent and colour. (Is silence producible by the cancelling out or the combination of vibrations?)

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Is Whistler right? Yes.

Are Michael Angelo, Dürer, Blake, and the great host of artists who have been in the main illustrators wrong? No.

So both are right? Yes: "for the time being," on one hand; and "for all time" on the other.

Der Keyser.



No. 3. Holbein. The Dance of Death.
Woodcut.

How are the apparent opposites to be reconciled?

It will be best to face the question to begin with rather than to fall into doubt as to whether a right course has been pursued when it may seem too late to alter it, and there is nothing to look back upon but a mistaken career in pursuit of false gods in art, as so many have done—and having lost faith in the idols they have loved, lose faith also in themselves.

WHISTLER ON THE CONTENT OF ART

In so far as Whistler's argument is confined to the emotional effect of paint or its effect on the primary sensations through the optic nerve—a good parallel may be drawn between the art of painting and the art of music* with its effect exercised through the ear. In

Die wapen des Thotß.



No. 4. Holbein. The Dance of Death.
Use of "local colour" noticeable as unusual.

both cases the effect produced is one of passive sympathy with the active producer, as though a hand were passed and re-passed in a hypnotic manner over his forehead so that the will and the intellect should be put to sleep, and a state of emotional trance produced.

But even in Whistler's argument he slithers over, apparently with a sense of the thinness of the ice, the

* See footnote on p. 7.

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question of portraiture. A gap has been carefully left in the quotation so that the question could be separately dealt with.

“Take the picture of my mother, exhibited at the Royal Academy as an ‘Arrangement in Grey and Black.’ Now that is what it is. To me it is interesting as a picture of my mother ; but what can or ought the public to care about the identity of the portrait ? ”

It is precisely the fact that Whistler’s logic broke down, and his emotion broke through that saves this work, that saved his Carlyle from a deadly academic perfection. The portrait of Miss Alexander would have been a “ perfect ” work of art, if the portraiture had not puzzled and betrayed him. His human sympathies were so limited, or rather perhaps so timid and reserved, that it was only under great stress that they informed, instead of interfering, with his pre-occupation with pattern or silhouette, and oppositions of tone and colour. He set out in search of pure pictorial art, and could not find it, except when, in his search, he stopped by the wayside, dropped his load of theory, and gave way to what he may have considered a weakness—and “ put on canvas something more than the face the model wore for that one day—in short, to paint the man as well as his features.” This he includes as part of the æsthetic of portrait painting. What else is this but Illustration in one of its simplest manifestations ? And what but this makes the portrait of his mother something more than a restful background to intelligent conversation ?

To look to art to produce a perfect flower, like a prize dahlia, is to look for something heartless and inhuman

WHISTLER ON THE CONTENT OF ART

—for art would then have become more a matter of exact mathematics than of the unknown. But Art consists of three factors in varying proportion—Intelligence, Emotion, and Craftsmanship—so to leave out Intelligence amounts to going without one of the primary colours in painting, and limiting the range of expression.

Art should be capable of expressing the reaction that is made against the whole impact of life upon the whole being of the artist ; and will be determined in its form by the medium the artist uses. To use a medium unsuited for what he wishes to express is inartistic. He will not endeavour to compel either his medium or his audience, being primarily concerned with perfect self-expression, and not with the effect of the expression on others.

The comparison of pictorial art with music alone may lead to a fallacy—for music is not in its pure form directly representative of observed sounds—whereas pictorial art does refer perpetually to observed forms and colours, and so speaks to those only who have to some extent exercised their intelligence. We do not compare the sounds of Beethoven's sonatas with sounds heard in nature—and it is probable that an idiot is capable of as keen an enjoyment, I do not say appreciation, of music as the most intelligent : while for the enjoyment, apart from the appreciation, of a work by Holbein, Dürer, or Michael Angelo, a complex of capacities is requisite. Music is a simple art, being generally even less representative and associated than the scent of the perfumer—while other arts are complex. The art of the painter is more nearly comparable

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to that of the poet. Words do not “reproduce” things, but “represent” ideas of them—and to represent or reproduce implies first production and presentation. Words are symbols, and not things or ideas—in a sense that sounds alone are not—and so are forms. A note has meaning only in its reference backwards and forwards in rhythm or simultaneously with other notes in harmony—as an individual note it symbolizes and suggests nothing at all but a hooter. Pictorial art in any form, like ordered speech, makes its appeal by means of recognisable symbols of things seen; and its appeal can only be to those who have seen enough to recognize the basis of the symbol and so can follow the process by which symbols are compared, or combined into a logical unit, just as words, each containing an idea, are formed into a grammatical sentence. Whistler’s argument holds good for our pleasure in the decoration and spacing of a wall—but not for the expression of a mind except in so far as a mind may find satisfaction for itself in such expression. Art on his written terms becomes nothing more than a beautiful background—against which all the action of life takes place, and in which Art has no concern and takes no interest. Luckily, in his painting he was not quite consistent; and his art keeps throughout some reference to common experience so that by the side of much of the work of later men it sometimes appears almost academic.

CHAPTER III

PURELY PICTORIAL ART

ALL traditional art has hitherto fallen into one of two categories so as to give rise to a question as to whether it is primarily concerned with the presentation or illustration of facts or of ideas—yet there is a third possibility open to the artist ; and it may perhaps be useful to explore it.

It has been said that there are only twenty-seven stories or jokes in the world ; yet the inventor of the riddle “ Why does a mouse when it spins ? ” who expected the answer to the question to be either “ Because the sooner the higher,” or “ Because the gossamer webs,” did invent a new form of humour that tickled some people and drove others to distraction. It is worth analysing since the originator of the question and answer must have been a logician, otherwise he could hardly have so volatilized all logic from his conundrum. In an atmosphere of prevailing solemnity there is in us something that responds rapidly to the perfectly irresponsible absurdity of this form of humour ; but it does demand for its bursting effect a prevalent solemnity rather than frivolity.

In the same way that the logician had managed to invent a question and answer that, while employing words, meant nothing whatever, and on that very account was capable of stirring an emotion either of amusement or anger—so the artist may at times

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endeavour to sift out those elements of line and colour which, while having no meaning external to themselves, may yet be capable of stirring the purely æsthetic emotions. These will always be likely to cause shock, like the riddle just quoted, to persons of set habits of mind who

Der Ritter.



No. 5. Holbein. The Dance of Death.

may consider the pride of reason to be insulted, when after all the shock is due only to surprise at being suddenly confronted by a confusing problem in æsthetics.

It cannot be denied that we may receive pleasure from a single unrelated colour—for instance, the dye of a Chinese or Indian silk—or from the sweeping rhythm of a meaningless line. A handwriting may be beautiful though we cannot read or understand the language it is written in. Is it possible to evolve an art,

PURELY PICTORIAL ART

then, from such elements as are here indicated that shall gratify the pure æsthetic emotion without calling upon the association of ideas—without representation close or remote, of observed facts ? To arrive, by means of rhythm of line and harmony of colour at an appeal to the emotions through the eye that shall be equivalent or nearly so to the pure art of music ?

It is an interesting speculation that I indulged in as a young man, to the extent of making and abandoning such experiments ; and I remember raising the question with Mr. D. S. MacColl. We were inclined at that time to conclude that organic form was the basis of all pictorial art—but of late years the new men either having more time or greater energy, or perhaps that the times are more nearly ripe for the appreciation of such efforts, seem to be experimenting along some such lines in various directions. It is doubtful if art can be so etherealized—or purified—so separated from record or symbol of external objects as to be made a means of communication of any but the most limited and faint emotions when compared with that of music. Pictorial art apart from its subject matter, makes its appeal more to the intellect than to the passions—and it will make this more simply and more intelligibly by the acceptance of the traditional means of expression, even though those means are more complex than those he proposes to employ.

It is difficult to imagine that the mind can arrive at combinations of pure form and colour at the same time more devoid of organic significance and more satisfactory æsthetically than are to be arrived at by such means as are used for the marbling of paper ; and in this

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connection it is worth recalling that Sterne used a sheet of marbled paper by way of an illustration to a passage in *Tristram Shandy*—just as in another place he had quite effectively introduced a black page. Here is the passage that the marbled page refers to : “ Who

Der König.



No. 6. Holbein. The Dance of Death.
Local colour again.

was *Tickletoby's* mare? Read, read, read, read, my unlearned reader! read—or by the knowledge of the great saint *Paraleipomenon* I tell you beforehand you had better throw down the book at once; for without *much reading*, by which your reverence knows I mean *much knowledge*, you will no more be able to penetrate the moral of the next marbled page (motley emblem of my work!) than the world with all its sagacity has been able to unravel the many opinions,

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transactions, and truths which still lie hid under the veil of the black one" (*Tristram Shandy*, Ch. xxxvi. The black page is given as preface to Ch. xiii.). In Chapter iv., Bk. ix, he gives a great curly pen scrawl as illustration of how the corporal flourished his stick. "While a man is free"—cried the corporal—"a thousand of my father's most subtle syllogisms could not have said more for celibacy" is the author's comment. Is this the "significant line" of which we now hear so much?

It seems unnecessary to pursue the consideration of the possibilities of art in the direction of the inorganic beyond the marbled and the black pages of Yorick.

CHAPTER IV

THOUGHT FORMS AND COLOURS

EFFORTS have been made by clairvoyants to set down the form and colour of thought and emotion, and even to represent the soul itself in terms of colour; and an illustrated book upon the subject, *Thought Forms*, by Mrs. A. Besant and Mr. C. W. Leadbeater, has been published. From a sympathetic review of the book we learn that "black indicates hatred and malice. Red of all shades shows anger—brutal anger is shown by flashes of lurid red from dark brown colours, while 'noble indignation' is a vivid scarlet. Clear brown denotes avarice, while dull grey-brown shows selfishness. Deep heavy grey denotes depression, and livid pale grey shows fear. . . . Grey-green denotes deceit; and brownish-green, usually flecked with scarlet, jealousy. Green is always the colour of adaptability: in the undeveloped man this expresses itself as deceit; at a later stage it becomes a desire to be all things to all men, even if only for popularity; and finally, in the developed man we have a wonderful luminous green denoting the highest sympathy. Affection shows itself in all shades of crimson and rose: when discoloured by brown and grey we find the affection is of a selfish, grasping nature; but pure pale rose denotes the highest unselfish love," etc. (*Bibby's Annual*, 1920). Coloured examples are given of forms generated by two persons "animated by an affectionate interest in an injured

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person " and a deep sympathy for his pain, and we notice that the colours in both are identical, though the outlines are very dissimilar. The one over whom the vague cloud floats is thinking " Poor fellow, how sad," while the other is already rushing forward to help.

Der Groff.



No. 7. Holbein. The Dance of Death.

The one is a dreamer of acute sensibilities, while the other is a man of action. Other examples were given in an earlier annual (1917) of "thought forms"; one of Love and Peace, Protection and Benediction "sent forth by one who has the power and has earned the right to bless,"—rather like a yellow sun with pink wings. A "Thought Form of watchful Jealousy" is like a single sharply pointed and curved cow's-horn, a 'Thought Form of Self Renunciation' is a pale blue flower-like shape, and "Anger directed against a

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person who had inflicted a deep injury on the one who sent it forth " is a simple vermilion spike. " The diagrams shown are not mere imaginings of what should take place, but are actual examples seen by clairvoyants and reproduced as carefully and accurately as possible . . . our imaginations must help us to understand something of the original from the representation of it we have before us." Interesting as these may be from the psychologist's point of view, their lack of recognisable relation to general experience renders them negligible as symbols, since, no matter how accurate they may be, in the absence of the verbal description, they succeed in carrying no more spiritual information to the ordinary spectator than is to be obtained from the freshly laid palette of a painter.

Emotional Significance of Colour

It is astonishing the lengths to which the literary argument may carry an enthusiast ; and an Art Editor once told the writer that the reason why red or crimson was the finest and noblest colour was that this was the colour chosen by the Creator for the Life-blood of Man, and that he derived this idea from Ruskin. That blood is never seen until a wound is made—that the appearance of the veins through the skin in health is blue—that brandy will call up more of its royal redness than the maiden's blush—and that until it is actually shed it may be any colour, since colour is imperceptible except by light ; that it may, in fact, be sea-green until its issue so far as any æsthetic considerations have to do with the matter ; that a butcher's shop should be the most gorgeous sight in the world

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except the slaughter-house, the operating theatre and the battle-field, where life blood is to be seen at its reddest and best ; and that sensitive persons faint at the sight of it should be final so far as that argument goes. Red (or crimson) is a gorgeous colour, but it is

Der Cardinal.



No. 8. Holbein. The Dance of Death.

associated at least as much with sunset as with sunrise ; and with the dying leaf as with the dying gladiator. It is a lovely colour in itself, and these arguments are absurd either in praise or blame of it. Argument might be maintained on the score that the most beautiful reds we have are vegetable dyes—the madders—but crimson lake certainly is derived from some sort of beetle. Such considerations are merely fanciful. Splendid crimsons are derived from gas-tar. That certain colours have certain physiological effects is

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true, that certain forms of light affect microbes for their good or ill is a scientific fact. A blue room has been entered of so vicious a quality that a definite physical antagonism was felt, as though vitality was being sucked out and absorbed. In the same place the red of another room exerted a pressure as stifling as a bolster. It is possible that the same taste would have chosen some yellow equivalent in viciousness to the sinister red and the blue. These sensations were entirely physical ; the colours had no significance, but were simple distemper wall papers without pattern : they were simply villainous colour. Since colour is capable of this physiological effect even without conveying any associated idea, it is obvious that its most powerful appeal will be made more to the senses than to the reason, and will have an emotional rather than an intellectual significance. It is an attribute of form, and cannot take its place. If a child is given a book of outlines and a colour box, it may entertain itself and us by painting a cow purple with pink spots ; yet the cow will remain a cow, just as the chameleon was only endeavouring to become a genius of its kind, a super-chameleon, though it burst in the attempt when it tried to match its surroundings by turning tartan.

The Michael Angelo in the National Gallery, where the flatly prepared underpainting of the flesh is so interestingly shown, is more genial in its unfinished than in its completed parts. The unfinished children are much more entertaining in emerald green without being in the least decadent. But then the outline is secure. A crow is not less a crow, nor a stoat less a stoat when albinism takes place ; they are in essence

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the same. A pink and white Zulu with flaxen hair is conceivable as being essentially Zulu: but no amount of burnt cork will make a negro of a Dane.

Mr. G. F. Watts laid out in conversation the theory that anyone could learn to draw; but that colour was

Der Krämer.



No. 9. Holbein. The Dance of Death.

a gift with which you had to be born. Yet there is a simple science of colour, more simple perhaps than of line. It is possible to state if the main scheme is green, that a note either of blue or of yellow will harmonize with it: and so on throughout the primary and secondary colours. That if contrast rather than harmony is called for, scarlet or green, or orange or blue, yellow or purple will give the most violent oppositions—and that suavity will be obtained by the division of opposing

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notes of colour by the interposition either of a secondary that contains them both, or of a tertiary. It is reducible much more to a mathematical formula than is line. Simple as this may sound, the combinations of colour are infinite, since the proportions of mixture are infinitely variable, but the full value of even its emotion-compelling properties can only be gained from its association with form.

Blake expressed himself with vigour on this subject, and his remarks are quoted elsewhere.

CHAPTER V

AUTOMATIC DRAWING AND THE POWER OF SUGGESTION

IN experiments in automatic drawing published in No. 1 of *Form*, a tendency to a repetition of similar shapes and penstrokes is visible on analysis ; and this may be set down rather to the fact that the fingers taking the line of least resistance, will be affected by the alternate play of the flexors and extensors in such a manner that, while the forearm remains at rest, a radiation of strokes becomes inevitable if the line is to remain continuous. From this will arise suggestions of many organic forms in which radiation is a principle of growth—as shells, wings, hands, feet, fur, and so on. The process seems to be rather mechanical than mental ; and the thought is inevitable, no matter how suggestive such drawings may be to their creator or others after they are done, that the “ Dreams and Memories of the Gods,” referred to by the authors, have little to do with them. It is muscular rather than intellectual automatism ; its interest lies in its suggestion of known forms or organisms, although in its production all thought or intention of representation was carefully suppressed. There does come now and again at long intervals a happy state of mind and body when the critical faculties are dormant, when without effort of will or exercise of choice a drawing seems almost to do itself, and the happy artist feels he could go on thus for ever. The hand and brain are in exact

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harmony; the hand is in no rebellion, so that the mind itself seems to be in the hand rather than dictating to it from a distance, and to be carrying through a transaction as smooth as thought itself, the emotional, physical, and intellectual faculties all collaborating. It

Die Hertzoginn.



No. 10. Holbein. The Dance of Death.

may be that genius has the secret of this co-ordination and can induce it at will—it is certain that this state does approach the ideal condition for the production of a work of art.

While every work of art calls for an amount of intelligence equivalent in its way to the artist's in order fully to appreciate it, a picture or drawing that leaves all the creative work to be done by the imagination of the spectator is a work rather more of artifice and less of art. There is in the reminiscences of Emily Soldene

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a story of Marius the singer and his top note that was the wonder of his time. Having sung the passage leading up to it he ran forward to the footlights, extended his arms, threw back his head and opened his mouth—the fiddles screamed—and the audience applauded with all their might the top note that existed only in their imagination. Marius, having got as high as he could go, indicated the rest.

The public, in fact, was hypnotized *en masse*—and always demanded an encore !

I have known a case of the most besotted hypnotism to happen in broad daylight, in Park Street, Camden Town, close to the trams and 'buses. A man I knew, of quite ordinary Cockney intelligence, who was in the habit of buying and selling all sorts of things on commission, from grand pianos to a bankrupt stock of red braces, and who "knew his way about," told me that he had been offered a picture painted by an old Dutch painter, Van Stern—did I know the name ? The picture, he said, was remarkable, in that while at a first glance it looked like an ordinary piece of still-life—just a bunch of grapes on a board, on a closer view on every grape could be seen landscapes, mountains, and, most extraordinary of all, crowds of tiny monks in procession, or carousing, all made out in the most wonderful and minute fashion. He had been offered the picture for fifteen pounds, and thought it must be a bargain—but before closing with the offer he would like my opinion—and my curiosity being aroused, I went with him. The furniture and curio dealer, I thought, cast on me no very friendly eye, but the picture was produced for my inspection, and my friend,

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the prospective buyer, brought out a pocket magnifying glass to aid me to discover the monks and the mountains. There they were truly enough just like Marius' top note, in his own hypnotized imagination. The picture was the poorest daub, not worth the grubby

Der Papst.



No. 11. Holbein. The Dance of Death.

frame in which it was. As we walked away he owned that he hadn't liked to contradict the fraudulent old thief by himself, and had ended by believing what he was told, though he couldn't really see it, but had been ashamed to admit his own lack of vision.

Of recent years it has been possible to account for a great deal of the work that passes muster with the critics and the public on no other grounds than this. The critics who found out how absurd they had in the bulk made themselves over Whistler, appear to have

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been afraid of committing themselves again—"Once bitten twice shy"—and, knowing their ignorance, have been anxious to conceal it, not by a critical cautiousness, but by running cheering by the side of any band that happened along with a big drum.

It is a curious thing that pictures are more generally appreciated through the ear than through the eye. People like to be told all about them—"observe this" and "observe that," and the other—generally insignificant or irrelevant detail or "finish" or "likeness."

Artists have endeavoured to purify art by leaving out all such sops to the uncultivated intelligence; and in their endeavour to appeal to the æsthetics of the eye only did at first bewilder the crowd and the critics who belong to it. At first sight a thing that is simply beautiful must appear empty to an eye that has grown to value a picture as it would appraise a bazaar stall, by the multitude of objects it contains. But once having been brought to the point of seeing that beauty must be simple, this attribute, simplicity, may be mistaken for beauty itself. The door is then open to the charlatan, who has no more to do than to scrawl or blot a sheet of paper, and bid the public, through the voice of the critic, to find the naked soul and body of Truth and Beauty displayed in all its purity.

Here we have Marius' top note and the Camden Town monks and mountains all over again; the public listening, enraptured, to nothing, and staring spell-bound into vacancy! Doing, in fact, everything itself and calling "encore!" It is hypnotism pure and simple, and the artist is in danger of becoming involved with the charlatan, the crystal gazer, and the quack.

CHAPTER VI

OBJECT AND SUBJECT

ANY art that contains or suggests a reference to something outside itself to the extent that it depends for its interest upon that reference may be said to be an illustration whenever the reference is to a fact or to an idea expressible in other terms. The idea contained may be entirely original to the artist, yet it will be none the less an illustration, and it is difficult to name a work short of a meaningless pattern that does not fall into the category. A drawing that suggests something like a man in some distant way, but depends mainly for its interest on rhythm, pattern or colour, may be almost able to escape falling inside our definition; but let it pretend to likeness or portraiture of a particular man or place, part of its interest being external to its lines, tones or colours, yet expressed by them, and it immediately becomes an illustration. If this is granted of facts, it will the more readily be accepted as true of ideas, conveyed by the same means, so long as there is any attempt at precision of expression on the part of the artist.

The cricket captain hardly realizes to what an extent his fate depends upon objective and subjective art; yet the mighty question of "winning the toss" depends on whether objective or subjective art shall fall uppermost—the illustration of fact or the illustration of idea—"Heads"—objective; "Tails"—subjective. This is worth while examining a little further.

OBJECT AND SUBJECT

Let us take a coin of Queen Victoria, 1886 or earlier, and examine the head—it was doubtless somewhat like her once—but in spite of a certain objectivity, the artist has so modified this, that, and the other, in his presentment that till the coinage was modernized at



PLATE 12. Holbein The Dance of Death.

It is pleasant to find that so precise a person as Holbein could put a left hand on a right arm.

the time of the Jubilee, objectivity threatened to yield almost entirely to subjectivity.

On the other side of the coin we have Britannia—an abstract idea presented in concrete terms—the ideal realized to a certain extent; but it is to be supposed that the artist had a sitter, and may even have made an exact portrait of the lady, probably more like her, while making no profession of being so, than the so-called portrait of Queen Victoria was like the Queen.

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The portraits of Gainsborough at times contain so much of the painter and so little of the sitter that we may frequently enough be in doubt whether to class them primarily as objective or subjective ; yet the blowsy goddesses of Rubens, while professedly subjective, leave us in no doubt whatever as to which side of the fence their weight will fall.

All illustrative art will be found to contain varying proportions of these two factors. Though one or the other may be found to be almost entirely absent, some slight infusion of one into the other is inevitable, even in work so subjective, let us say, as Beardsley's or so objective as Menzel's, though in both cases this infusion is as nearly as possible absent. It is the varying balance that is maintained between these two factors which will decide the sympathetic or antagonistic attitude of the spectator, as it answers to his own mood or otherwise. The work of Beardsley may annoy to fury the matter-of-fact ; yet be beloved of the sophisticated. The work of Menzel may contain nothing for the spiritual minded and mystic, while delighting the prosaic historian. Charles Keene and Phil May, standing midway and dealing with æsthetic problems of expression in different ways, were each popular, for their humour appealed to the mass ; but the problems of impressionism which Charles Keene dealt with at times, interfered to some extent with his popularity ; while Phil May, by dealing with atmospheric effect in so summary a manner as almost to dismiss introduced no disturbing element, and require subtlety on the part of the spectator to see cellence. Feminine grace will naturally appeal to



No. 13 Durer. Woodcut.

A great tapestry, based largely on this design, was shown in the Spanish Exhibition at the Royal Academy, 1920-21.

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majority, and the nearer this approaches to the common idea, fashionable at the moment, the wider will be the appeal.

No artist's work is dull if this tug-of-war is going on inside his brain ; if the rope is kept taut between the objective and the subjective. The slacker it becomes the nearer we get to uninspired craftsmanship, which is the machinery of art and not art itself. The craftsmanship may be perfect, as in the work of Bartolozzi, who was as glib as possible at great expense of meaning, or to seek, as in the work of Blake, with whom it was a perpetual stumbling block, landing him nearly into incoherence, like an insufficiently educated person who has not the words to convey his meaning. But no matter how perfect the craftsman may be, he can never give more delight by his craft alone than the cabinet-maker's perfect drawer work.

Craftsmanship can be learnt ; and is taught, but its employment is a spiritual matter peculiar to the artist, whose language it is—his means of expression and not his aim.

Idealism and Realism

Art has generally been divided roughly under two headings, Idealism and Realism ; but these terms have been so frequently misapplied as to be consequently in danger of being misunderstood. There was endless controversy over the exact meaning of the word Impressionism, maintaining as it did a nice poise between the objective and the subjective elements, but this is now well understood. Idealism came to stand, with most people, for something that amounted to no more



No. 14. Durer. Dürer rarely if ever introduces "local colour."

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than an alteration and falsification in the representation of an object along the lines of a preference. The leaving out in a portrait of a lady's wrinkles and double chin is not "idealization," but flattery. Flattery does not produce an ideal, and will not in itself make the result either good or bad art. Our concern is to discover whether the artist looks primarily outwards or inwards for his subject matter—whether for an abstraction of thought, or for an aspect of an external thing seen. For the expression of abstract thought it will be found necessary to employ some recognisable object or objects as a symbol or symbols in such a relation as to enforce the idea—these symbols may be expressed in terms of the closest realism—while the artist's primary aim has not been to record the impression caused through his eye, still less a deceptive realism of effect; his concern having lain with their inner meaning and not their aspect. Under this head will be placed the work of Michael Angelo, Dürer, and Blake, in descending scale to Beardsley, and the cartoonist of the daily press. The other great division is that in which the artist is concerned primarily with the aspect of external things rather than with any meaning they may possess for him or for others. His emphasis will generally fall where his preoccupation lies—on form, light, colour, tone, extracting from the infinite variety of the spectacle such things as most gratify his sense of sight, and in such a manner that he can communicate his impression of them to other minds. Under this head would most naturally fall the work of Velasquez, Rembrandt, Gainsborough to Menzel, Charles Keene, and Phil May. There is a large class of work lying midway with

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a tendency balancing more or less between one side or the other—as example Hogarth—who might be matched in literature with Bunyan, two curiously prosaic minds stringing their facts together on the thread of a moral and dramatic idea, and both peculiarly English in the compromise. Whistler looked upon Hogarth as the father of English art, or at least as the first great and typically English artist. It is interesting that Blake and Whistler should combine in this point of appreciation.

The English love of a picture that tells a recognisable story, where the people are represented as doing, having done, or about to do something even though it is expressed in the crudest and least æsthetic terms, may date from Hogarth, and this love has frequently been indulged to the detriment of the true æsthetic functions of the pictorial artist.

CHAPTER VII

VIVID VISION OF FACTS

THE pendulum swings perpetually between an acceptance and recreation of the visible world, and the imposition of a world of idea from which, no matter how much it has derived from the world of fact, the visible world has been put away as far as may be.

There is a point in the swing, where, to the happy, the world of fact and the world of vision coincide. These are the golden moments of art, when the mind can bask as in a high-walled garden. Everyone has his his own garden of delights, in which he can surrender to a secret enchantment.

To some Uccello's great battle scene, Botticelli's Madonna and Child, Nicolo Pisano's St. Eustace, Millais' Autumn Leaves or Sir Isumbras, a Chinese vase or a Japanese print, Whistler's Little White Girl, or the Music Room—a blue landscape by Patinir—any or all of these may bring the sense of glamorous contentment.

There is a moment now and again vouchsafed when seeing does in itself approach to ecstasy, when the thing seen is felt to contain the divine essence communicated by sight. In these moments of happy receptivity the commonest object discharges its most vivid significance, and it may be from repeated experiences of this kind that the Pantheistic idea takes its origin; and



No. 15. Durer. What "colour" Durer obtains is derived generally from modelling of form and a somewhat arbitrary use of shadow or shade.

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that later these ideas being simplified, the idea of One universal God and the Immanence of God came about. With these states of vivid experience goes the sense of the community of life with a flower, an animal or a tree, a sense sometimes of the infinite intelligence peering through some tiny keyhole as in a game of "I spy" so vividly felt that it is as though it were a glowing secret shared with the object through or by which it appears to be communicated. Children start with this intensity of vision, which too often fades with the years, or becomes clouded in the crush. "The world is too much with us"; but the Pre-Raphaelites, mediæval and modern, had this vision which gives their work its value. It is not the multitude or the "finish" of the facts presented, but the intensity with which they have been seen that lifts such work from the prose of Menzel to the poetry of Millais' early work.

A house agent with whom I fell into a chance conversation told me that when serving in the war he was in Italy; and in training there, practising a bayonet charge and yelling, when the Tommy next to him suddenly gasped out, "My God! isn't it just like a picture in the National Gallery—all them little trees on them hills." His own thought was simultaneous; he had thought the "backgrounds to those Madonnas," a bit on one side of a brocaded canopy and a bit on the other, some "squint-eyed" convention, till he came upon the reality in this vivid way himself. Probably now it is not so much Nature but Art that has taken a new significance for him. But something must have got home to these two independent Cockney minds making

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a bored stroll through the National Gallery on a wet half-holiday, for it to strike again in such a situation when the senses might be expected to be little open to impressions from outside. Tennyson's observation : " Strange that the mind when fraught With a passion so intense That it should from being so overwrought Suddenly strike on a sharper sense For a shell or a flower—little things That else would have been passed by "—is well borne out here, although the battle was only a mimic one.

In art all the desirable qualities of craftsmanship combined may not suffice to convey this emotion without some such passionate quality of vision, which seems to accept all, rather than to select and reject, yet is never mechanical in its acceptance. I have heard J. F. Lewis spoken of as having the Pre-Raphaelite qualities. He had more than all their qualities of exact and minute representation, probably a more subtle vision and certainly a more facile brush, and something that remains aromatic in the mind after many years. He could introduce and keep in its place there, with apparent ease, more detail to the square inch than any of them. He had more than all their qualities, but this one of intensity ; and, exquisite as some of his pictures are, they do not convey that sense of fervid ecstasy and significance which is derivable from this highest type of objective vision, in which a definite yet elusive something more is communicated than the physical effect on the eye. This high objective vision is more truly imaginative than many pontifical works that lay pompous claim to that high title—which frequently enough are simply a combination of the stock in trade of fancy—justice,

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Fortitude, and such, in shining armour, and wings and things by the glibly oiled machinery of the high-artist.

Imagination does not necessarily fly away from "facts." But there are two kinds of imagination—one that looks outward for its image, and another that looks inward. Blake's work would have been the richer and the better could he have used his objective vision with greater reverence, instead of with a saintly contempt for it, as a hindrance. It was the great defect of his great quality. At another period than the one in which he worked, when exactitude of observation was as nothing to the "grand manner" and strict draughtsmanship at a discount, he might by absorption of another atmosphere have been able to express himself with no less torrential a passion, perhaps with greater force, and certainly with more lucidity than he generally employed. It cannot be insisted on too much that imagination is not a woolly affair outside reason; but pointed and sharp-edged. It is not a matter between waking and sleeping—a confusion of misty moons and dim stars, but of clear hard day, to which all the faculties of the mind contribute. The misconception must be guarded against that what has been written about the highest qualities of "objective vision" and "significance" is intended to convey the idea that art has any "preaching" or moralizing mission. On the contrary, any attempt on the part of the artist at what in America is called "uplift" is damnable. Art has, or may have, indirectly a civilizing influence, but that is accidental and has nothing to do with the artist. The artist who goes into the pulpit goes into competition with the scold, and he should compete with nothing.



No. 16. Dürer.

CHAPTER VIII

FORM AND LINE

Technique

THE shape of the space occupied by any object animate or inanimate is that by which it is primarily and finally differentiated from others. It is tangible in the dark—a blind man may know it by touch—and a line that will mark off this limit of occupied space will be the simplest means of recording on a flat surface its existence and kind. The comparative bulk and shape of objects is of the first importance ; and, so far as appearances go, all other qualities are attributes of that shape and bulk. Length, breadth, and to a certain extent thickness, are expressible by means of the contour line of an object as it strikes the retina, and by this line it will be most generally recognisable.

In speaking of line, strictly rather than suggestively used, it is a convenience to call this primary line delimiting an object the Noun or Substantive line ; and all others included within its boundary by which the surface is qualified or modified, “ adjective lines,” and the value of these depends upon their aptness of application to the particular noun they qualify. It is important in pictorial art as in literary that the masculine force of the noun should not be frittered away under lacy, hesitant, or belittling qualifications. The line of movement or growth, or of the action of a figure or of rhythm in a composition corresponds to the verb.

An important point to consider is the thickness of

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this line. Its power should be sufficient in the first place to be readily seen at the intended focus of the drawing, and to dominate the space it occupies, and not be swamped by it. A thin line is sometimes regarded as an object to be aimed at for its own sake as being "delicate" or "refined" and a thick line as being "coarse" or "brutal." Neither thickness nor thinness of line has any particular virtue except in relation to the space it occupies, and the purpose of its employment. If it is a line that is intended to "carry" as an individual, it should have sufficient force or thickness to do so—but if it is to form part of a group of lines it must do team work, and not be obstreperous in the chorus. A common fault in line drawings is that the first lines set down are lacking in force. In consequence it is difficult to subordinate other lines to them, so that much subsequent work goes towards bolstering up the primaries in an effort to disentangle them from the confusion that results where such a course has been followed. If the primary lines are thin, still thinner lines will be required to qualify them; and, while theoretically there is no limit to this thinness, in practice there is a very definite one, and the draughtsman finds that he is left with nothing "up his sleeve," having exhausted his store too early. It is remarkable how bold a line is the basis of many apparently "delicate" drawings, for by the time all qualifications have been added, and secondary forms on a more distant plane introduced, the "noun" line must have considerable force to hold its dominant place in the composition.

This is noticeable in the case of almost any of Phil

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May's drawings, which depend for their effect principally on the use of a system of thick outline for foreground figures, with an outline of similar character for distant objects, but growing thinner in proportion to the distance. These outlines are drawn with a pen



No. 17. Hans Burgkmair.

that normally would yield the thickness required without much pressure on the one hand, or an undue nervousness of handling to induce a line thinner than the natural stroke of the pen. A finer pen is then taken, and the modelling of the faces, fine shadows, and quite distant objects introduced with as slight expenditure of nerve in doing battle with the instrument as need be. Local colour is simply and boldly suggested by practically flat spaces of more or less parallel lines with little or no modelling, sometimes even by solid black. Light and shade are introduced only to give solidity

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to form, and local colour for the sake of pattern, and the avoidance of thinness or monotony of effect.

Pens

A pen drawing should not be undertaken without



No. 18. Hans Burgkmair.

an assortment of pens in good working order ready at hand in penholders laid out—their points towards the artist so that he may immediately pick out a suitable one for his purpose. For an ordinary sized drawing (up to, say, quarter imperial), a Waverley (Macniven and Cameron) and a Gillot's 303 prove highly serviceable. Phil May was very pleased with a pen called the "Camel" for his strongest outlines—I forget the name of the maker, but it may still be obtainable. It was a very free working pen, with a turned up point, which made a broader stroke than the Waverley—and had

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an arrangement for carrying a good load of ink without blotting.

The most exciting pen to use is Brandaur's 518, which was originally made specially for lithographers for work upon stone. It is cut from a narrow strip of very thin steel, and has only the tiniest slit at the tip, which is extraordinarily fine. With this pen it is possible to execute the minutest work, or by exercising pressure to obtain a line of considerable thickness, or by using the pen sideways to get a stroke from the whole or part of the side running up to the tip ; but woe betide the drawing if the point, which is as sharp as a pin, should catch in the paper, for the most terrific splutter is certain to result. It is a wonderful pen, and for gymnastics in penmanship, for richness or fineness has no equal, but it requires sensitive handling and a smooth surface for drawing upon. If great flexibility of line is aimed at with sensitive variations or gradations of thickness in the length of the line it has no equal, the characteristic result of its employment being not unlike a drypoint where the burr has been freely used.

The " J " type of pen is very useful for certain purposes. It is best to accept the width of its tip as the greatest thickness of line it will yield, rather than to apply pressure. By using it sideways a very fine line can be obtained ; so that if it is desired it is possible to draw a curve gradating in thickness from the full breadth of the tip to a very fine stroke, not by variation of pressure but of direction, and so yielding a result not unlike that of the work done by the elder stylists with their quill or reed pens before the introduction of the steel nib.

FORM AND LINE

For decorative purposes such as Aubrey Beardsley's, a stiffish, not very flexible, pen is the preferable instrument, and one that will hold a good supply of ink, in



No. 19. Hans Burgkmair. Detail of Woodcut, remarkable for richness of colour achieved by simple means.

order to get the whole of a long line in one rhythmic stroke, otherwise the line may be broken ; and if this is not avoided there is considerable expenditure of nerve in resuming the line, and since pen drawing

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necessarily is a nervous task, any unnecessary expenditure should be avoided.

Paper

For the same reason it is essential that both pens and ink should be in good condition, and the right sort of paper or cardboard chosen for the work in hand. A smooth surface is necessary for a fine unbroken line and close work, but if this is not requisite a certain amount of "tooth," just sufficient to give a slight resistance to the pen and prevent a sense of slipperiness, is pleasanter to work upon, the sensation being comparable to the etcher's as his needle curds through the wax of the ground. For photographic reproduction a clean line "comes" best, as if a line is composed of a series of dots, some of the dots are apt to be eaten away; or on the other hand, if they are very close together, the printing ink may fill up the interstices. If the drawing is a bold one, these defects are generally so minute as to have little effect on the general result, and may be almost disregarded. It is better to risk these minor mechanical defects than allow the possibility of them to hamper the freedom of the draughtsmanship.

If an elaborate pencil drawing has been made upon the paper which is to carry the final pen drawing, any superfluity of lead should be removed before starting the drawing in ink, rather than after the drawing is apparently complete, since, in the latter case, it may be found that the lead has prevented the ink in places from soaking into the paper, and only a grey and ragged stain is left, which may have to be gone over again in ink.

FORM AND LINE

It is generally better in laying a tone of more or less horizontal lines to start with the uppermost and continue downwards, not only because the work done is seen better, but to prevent the ink hanging below the pen from catching the still wet ink standing up on the line below, as frequently happens unless this precaution is taken, and a thick line results where two thin ones were intended. For the same reason, if the draughtsman is right-handed, he should start any vertical series of lines at the left and work towards the right—a left-handed artist would, of course, start from the right. There is always a risk of smudging the work unless these precautions are taken, and smudges, by a curious perversity, generally fall where they are most difficult to remove.

The surface of the paper should be carefully handled, particularly if it is a smooth one like Bristol Board, as it may become greasy if much fingered, and so reject ink altogether or in part.

Ink

Many artist's colourmen put up so-called "Chinese" or "Indian" ink in bottles, and there are several well-known brands which save the trouble of working it up from the stick in the old way. There are also brands of waterproof ink, which are useful if it is proposed to use pen as the basis of a wash or colour drawing. These are apt to corrode and clog the legs of the pen very rapidly, so that they are not always an advantage in use.

These bottled inks should always be well shaken before being uncorked for the first time, as they

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sometimes become syrupy if they have stood long ; and the pen may come from the bottle with a long ropy mass hanging to it, quite unfit for use in that condition, but which dissolves if well shaken.

The price of these inks, always a consideration, became so high during and after the war that a thoroughly efficient substitute may be welcomed in Stevens' Ebony Stain, which is in some ways preferable in the working as well as being incomparably cheaper. It may be used for the finest pen work, as it is very free running ; but it is not waterproof, and should not be used where it is proposed to mix methods. The best plan is to pour out a moderate quantity into a small bottle from the jar, and to renew this from time to time, as it thickens by evaporation—the fresher it is the more freely it works. All inks should be corked when not in use for this reason, as well as to prevent dust getting to them.

If ink is not poured out of the ordinary small upright bottles, in which it is usually supplied, into one with a larger base, it will almost inevitably be upset sooner or later. The ink is wasted, and besides the mess and loss of temper, if books or drawings are lying about much damage may be done. It is wise, therefore, to take some such precaution as the following. Place the bottle in the centre of a piece of stout cardboard about five or six inches square, and draw its plan upon the card by running the point of a pencil closely round it. Cut out the shape thus marked in the centre so that the bottle can only just be thrust through the hole ; then fit the cardboard upon the bottle about an inch from its base. This collar will serve the double



No. 20. Campagnola. Early example of facsimile wood-cutting, where the accidents of penmanship are closely followed.

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purpose of catching the drops of ink from an over-charged pen, and also prevent the bottle from being readily upset. A card thus prepared will outlast many bottles of ink and effect great saving of ink and carpets.

Reference Books

It is a good plan for an illustrator, besides carrying a sketch-book at all times in which to jot down ideas, types, backgrounds, and so on, to make collections in scrap books under some simple system so that they may be readily accessible if called upon. Stores catalogues, furniture catalogues, dressmakers' circulars, the "Architect's Compendium," and such like productions, where constructional facts are given prosaically but clearly, are often useful for reference.

Good illustrated books of Natural History, Architecture, and Historic Costume should form part of an illustrator's equipment.

Quality of Line

A true draughtsman is interested in the construction, character, and articulation of his subject, as well as the proportion, so that he is never content with a vague indication or flat map. Even though he is restricted to the use of a single line, yet line is capable of many qualities, as slowness or tremulousness, so that in spite of its apparent simplicity it is, to its lovers, as sensitive and as expressive as the violin. Volume is not its primary aim, but selection, movement and quality of vibration, so that if we imagine a violinist playing his own composition we have a close parallel with the art of the pen draughtsman.

FORM AND LINE

An excess of grace notes, or sliding from one note to another, has much the same effect upon the violin or in singing that an excess of curvature has in drawing. Though it is often said, and may be true, that there is no straight line in nature, we may accept so much of



No. 21. Rubens. Woodcut by Christoffel Jegher. An interesting example of translation into line in the manner of an engraving on metal.

the line made by the calm sea on the horizon as comes within the limit of distinct vision at a glance, if accurately drawn, as sufficiently straight for the practical purposes of artistic expression, and any part or parts of it, and a ruler will have as much curvature as is necessary for its exact representation. Blake insists that there is every line in nature. If there is not such a thing, it was necessary to invent one. Einstein's theory is popularly misconceived to be that straight lines are bent.

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To return to the consideration of the weakness that is frequently given by continuous unstiffened curvature. It will be found that it is possible to communicate a sense of curvature to the whole of a straight line by a short curve ; but by no means can a straight line prolong its stiffness into the curve, but will rather emphasize its significance. The artist's eye often tricks him therefore in recording his impression into a lack of reserve : his line misses the pride of grace or the strength proper to it, and becomes weak and sentimental on the one hand, or robustious and podgy on the other.

In the " living " as opposed to the " dead " line there is a quality of elasticity through its whole length, as though pressure were visibly at work in two directions at right angles to it, one to press it outwards and another to keep it back. So that where it appears likely to bulge or balloon softly and roundly outwards it is pressed and flattened back by a restraining force always in play. Between these two powers it finds its way ; sometimes one sometimes the other of these appearing to get the upper hand, but it is the sense of these antagonistic pressures that gives the line its living quality even when coldly deliberate, as in the drawing of Holbein's heads. In a swiftly drawn line, as in one of Helleu's early dry points, we share a sense of risk and the excitement of insecurity with the artist—we watch him as we might Jessop hitting sixes, it is a case of hit or miss—while in Holbein's hands we feel " safe as the bank." In one we feel that the mind is made up in a flash, and the line then cut in ; in the other that the stroke is deliberately carried out without haste

FORM AND LINE

simultaneously with the operation of the thought, the hand being all the time guided by the choice of the brain, and never dictating the stroke.

The eye caresses the form and the hand traces its passage upon the paper.



No. 22 Rubens. Woodcut by Christoffel Jegher. Unusual inflexibility of line, and in the amount of imitation of "cross-hatching" in woodcut.

In fine drawing, no matter how simple the line, its next move can never be exactly forecast—it may continue in its course or change its curve—but its continuance will be as unexpected as its change. Holbein's line never travels swiftly even at its straightest, but is full of incident along its whole journey. A line so straight or a curve so unbroken that its centre or foci are obvious cannot convey this mental excitement,

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since the mind is not held in expectation or suspense about a matter that appears obvious. It is like a journey from point to point in a sleeping car—as though there were nothing between London and Edinburgh. Hogarth's theoretic "line of beauty" might be truer were the two curves differently proportioned and separated by a straight interval. As it is it is too glib : containing no element of mystery or unexpectedness, and it lacks backbone.

A draughtsman might well spend a devoted lifetime drawing the fairy grace and light strength of the knotted grass ; the fern as it uncurls its spirals into a pastoral staff ; the long water weeds as, anchored to a common centre, the free ends reach out waving in an ever recurrent and harmonious rhythm in the stream, or in a still pool copying the radiation of the stems of the water lily. There are no more exquisite rhythms than the spirals and wreaths from the smoke of a cigarette, or a dance of flame and sparks when the fire is stirred. Whether these things be drawn or not, the loving observation of them, and even more the pleasure derived from them, will consciously and unconsciously, teach more to the artist than any treatise could hope to begin to do. These are things of nature's own ordering ; how or why they should have the effect upon our minds that they do is a mystery beyond analysis, but the cause of the effect may be imitated by the artist, not only by drawing those objects in which the effects are observed but by transferring like causes to other objects, and by this means many beautiful variations will be obtained, yet all in accordance with law.

This sense of an underlying rhythm runs all through

CHAPTER IX

SYMBOLISM

SYMBOLISM is a matter that is commonly looked upon as something misty and vague, though its object is rather to express vividly in simple, concrete and familiar terms, the abstract, the unfamiliar, the invisible, and the intangible. The strategist at dinner will explain the course of a battle with a knife and a fork to represent the trenches, breadcrumbs for battalions, and a spoon for headquarters ; not that any of these bear the least resemblance to the things represented, but with the aid of such labels as he gives them in his description a much clearer idea may be formed of the progress of affairs than without such simple aids. These are crude symbols, needing explanation at the outset. The introduction of the child's wooden soldiers will add a more obviously intelligible symbol than the bread ; and if the knife, fork and spoon are similarly replaced upon a map of the country a truly vivid and realistic idea may be conveyed. The chess board and men doubtless originated in some such ancient *Kriegspiel*—possibly between two strategists at a dinner table.

Such, of course, are simple examples, since to many the things represented by these symbols are as familiar as the symbols themselves. It is different when it is not a familiar thing, but an unfamiliar idea which has to be represented in such ordinary forms that it may be understood through the eye, where an abstract thought

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No. 24 Jan Lievens. Woodcut. Fine example of understanding of possibilities and limitations of the wood-cutter's art.

has to be presented in a concrete image, so that the unknown may be expressed or indicated by the known.

Symbols that have been used for centuries have in

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many cases become as familiar and as much part of the common stock as the language. It is difficult to say or hear the word "angel" without simultaneously forming an image of a winged being, so much so that to many minds it might seem almost a sacrilege to suggest that this form is not an article of faith, though it is no more than an artistic convention by which the idea of a messenger through space is conveyed, a spirit presumably not being dependent on wings with which to cleave the air. Yet the wings convey the idea as nothing else could. Time itself is a convention—a fiction by which we measure movement in space, and is an entirely relative matter. If the world took suddenly to revolving more or less rapidly we should have to recast our standards; if it stood still could we measure time at all? The world has come to look upon Time as an old man with a scythe, from the best known symbol employed; Watts preferred to represent him as a young man marching boldly forward; it would be quite consistent to represent him as a new born child, the conception of Time being determined by the view of Eternity. Blake, in a playful lyric, sings "Why was Cupid a boy":

And why a boy was he?
He should have been a girl
For aught that I can see.

Then to make Cupid a boy
Was surely a woman's plan,
For a boy never learns so much
Till he has become a man.

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A great deal might be said for a general recasting of a symbolism that has become so familiar that the freshness of its appeal has vanished. At any rate, those who use old symbols should endeavour to breathe conviction into them, so that they are no longer wooden puppets and stale abstractions, but are informed with living character, with as much spirit as their first creators put into them.

It is a pity that so few traces of a national mythology remain in Britain in the popular mind ; all that remains to it being such few scraps as Shakespeare and Milton have preserved, like Robin Goodfellow, Queen Mab, and Lob-lie-by-the-fire. Our fairy lore seems to be mainly Teutonic, and of comparatively late introduction to the country. In Ireland they still have the Leprechaun, which is firmly believed in ; and being so, is frequently visible to the eyes of faith. But the fairies seem to have flitted away from England, and an alien race of Gods and Goddesses to have taken their place. The merman is forsaken. Even Wordsworth seems to have felt something of this, and might be sighing for the earlier gods of England, though they are foreigners whom he names :

“ Great God I’d rather be
A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn ;
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea ;
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn.”

Blake invented a huge mythological system of his own for England, both written and drawn, but the English

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genius is perhaps too matter of fact and unimaginative to use imagery as a means of national expression, having imported its stock ready-made from Palestine and the nearer East and South ; but these have hardly



No. 25. Blake Jerusalem. Drawn on metal and etched to print as type, by Blake's "revealed" method.

got into the bones and blood of the people themselves, being rather a cult of the Church and the Universities ; Adam and Eve have become acclimatized as a public-house sign, but the " Rising Sun " is a more general and more Pagan one. The " Apollo " tavern has disappeared, and Britannia, John Bull and Mrs. Grundy are almost all that we have of popular imagery, though St. George, now that the gold coinage is gone, is sometimes seen as a C3 saint on the popular " Bradburys."

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The Scots personify their rivers and make them talk grimly :

“ ‘Tweed says to Till wha’ gars ye rin sae sla’ ?

‘Till says to ‘Tweed, ‘ Where ye droon ae mon
I droon twa’ .”

or something like that. Milton has Sabrina ; but his Severn flows through Italy rather than England, and this personification of trees, rivers, mountains and lakes belongs generally to a cultivated and artificial poetic convention and fancy without conviction, and we have it at last apologetically introduced as in Tennyson’s Brook, which babbles by machinery—not a product of the countryside so much as of the University.

CHAPTER X

CARTOONS

THE work of the cartoonist involves many considerations from the highest to the lowest. As it provides a ready vehicle for ridicule, and as ridicule is perhaps the greatest destructive power in the world, the artist entrusted with the use of such a weapon should have a strong sense of responsibility if he hopes to carry any weight. In England there is a code of manners imposed which has reduced this power almost to that of a wasp without a sting, so that it is hardly now by one savage onslaught that the foe is driven off, but rather by a general buzz of long continued disparagement.

Though the cartoonist has in his hands the weapon of ridicule, his art is not to be confounded with that of the caricaturist pure and simple, as is so frequently done ; caricature is but part of his equipment to be used if need be ; the greater the cartoonist the less necessary it may be to him, but the need for emphasis and clarity being so great, most cartoonists use it at least occasionally. The power of the cartoon lies in its rapid and graphic summary of a situation, appealing to the sympathies or confirming the prejudices of the spectator, or as a means of more or less diagrammatically simplifying and explaining it at a glance. At its lowest this calls for considerable skill, and, at its highest, for all the powers the artist has at command. All his

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resources of conception, symbolism, dramatic ability, realism, knowledge not only of his art, but of its power to excite the æsthetic and other emotions, may be called into play ; and most frequently, if he is to have any effect on staying or speeding the general current of opinion, all these must be available at a moment's notice.

In a cartoon the appeal should be instant to the eye, and nothing introduced that may overlay its significance. It should be reduced to the simplest and most forcible terms, like a " poster " and be as readable as a title page, and the mind left undisturbed by the least irrelevance to the main idea. Line is therefore the best medium to use, without attempt to convey atmospheric effect or a sense of realism. Atmosphere and any generality of statement will be found to pad and muffle the impact of the idea to be conveyed. Since vividness and clarity are the first essentials only a misguided person will use a full-tone wash drawing for such a purpose.

If Ridicule had had freer play many an absurd bubble might have been pricked without bloodshed ; and if Art is to be informed with a purpose outside itself the artist may look for no higher employment than may be found in the art of the cartoonist. This, though sometimes ignorantly despised, may at its best bear a like relation to pure pictorial art that the finest oratory bears to literature, and hold as high a rank.

Caricature

In strict caricature, while an excess of objectivity might be expected, it will not always be found—witness the work of Ospovat and Max Beerbohm—where

*All Human Forms identified even Tree Metal Earth & Stone. all
Human Forms identified living going forth & returning wearied
into the Planetary lives of Years Months Days & Hours repassing
And then Awakening into his Bosom in the Life of Immortality.
And I heard the Name of their Emanations they are named Jerusalem*

*The End of The Song
of Jerusalem*



No. 26. Blake. Jerusalem. Characteristic expression of joyful and rushing movement.

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objectivity is almost absent—it has been distilled till only the essential spirit remains. We may say that the caricaturist is subjective in exact proportion to his departure from exactitude of presentation of the literal, that is, the objective fact. While the emphasis is laid on the object, the choice of stress and the extent of it is so personal to the artist, and is so large a part of his art as to remove him at times almost from the ranks of the objective into the subjective, even though the intention of the stress be to emphasize the object. By losing himself the caricaturist is discovered.

Caricature consists, on the negative side, in the elimination of that part of the character of the object that it holds most in common with others—that is, the partial or entire elimination of the average. On the positive or constructive side it actively insists in varying degrees of emphasis on that which appears to the artist to be most individual. It differs as far as possible from the photographer's amusing but futile effort to arrive by means of the composite photograph at the common factor.

The summary definition we could most readily apply to caricature is "emphasis," but art itself has been so summarized, so that we are left with caricature still to define. How then do we distinguish caricature from other forms of art unless we may be allowed the euphuism that it is "emphatic emphasis"—approaching emphasis to the n th power—like the loading of a girder only short of the breaking strain, or stretching an elastic to its snapping point. The further art removes itself from the norm the more fully it becomes caricature, and, to adopt the current slang, as, considering



No. 27. Blake. Jerusalem.

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the subject, seems permissible—the Art of Absolute Caricature is “the limit.”

A door is either open or shut—yet, obvious as the fact is, many people do not seem to realize that, while there is only one degree of being shut, there are many degrees of being open. So the door of art may be open so little that it may be called ajar—to allow the thin ghost of something that is hardly distinguishable from a photograph to squeeze through—or so wide-flung that its possible exclusiveness may be hardly realized—to admit the portly figure of Daumier’s “fat friend.”

In England, in spite of the great reputation of Gilray and Rowlandson, the art of strict caricature can hardly be said to have flourished. Gilray was a coarse and clumsy draughtsman (“coarse” referring here to style of drawing, apart from what is generally implied in “coarse-minded.”). *Vanity Fair* is perhaps the measure of what is commonly considered caricature in England; and in its earlier days there were attempts at something like a critical portraiture, but for the most part they were somewhat stodgy, degenerating too frequently into the large head on the little body, the portrait itself being more or less photographically accurate, drawn without the fire or intensity of interest requisite to enliven the art, or even the spark of mischief or malice that at least removes it from dulness.

I can recall no fierce and fine draughtsman who has devoted himself to the art in England of the calibre of Leandre in France, but it is true that it is rare in the history of art (even so-called “serious” art—all art is serious) to find a finer stylist than he.

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The Yorick Club used to be rich in a collection of pastel caricatures of its members by S. H. Sime, but these have never, so far as I know, been published, and only members and guests of the Club are fortunate enough to know them.



No. 28. Blake. Jerusalem.

Ospovat had the keen eye for character, the satiric humour, and the selective sense of the born caricaturist with the ability to express it in a swift and witty craftsmanship that is part and parcel of the artist's thought. It is a pity that his career was so short, and that the knowledge of his work in this direction is so restricted.

On the Christmas crackers it used to be the custom to have grotesque faces modelled in soft indiarubber that, as children, we called Zany's. These could be squeezed together or elongated in the most fantastic manner so that a fat, round face, already grotesque, could be pulled into a long thin one, or a long thin one

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compressed to fatness, yet the essential character remained the same. The caricaturist has this power over his subject in an even more complex manner, for he can enlarge, reduce, or suppress at will any part as seems good to him, thereby not only maintaining but emphasizing the special characteristics of the individual.



No 29. Blake. Jerusalem.

It is possible to imagine a drawing of Marie Lloyd by Leandre that should leave out her eyes and mouth, to set beside the caricature by Ospovat that leaves out her nose, relying upon the exaggerated portraiture of a pair of teeth, that should yet convey an equally good idea of the same lady, and have in some indefinable way a resemblance to Ospovat's version, without reference to the source of the common inspiration. Yet distortion, amusing as its effects may be, is not to be mistaken for the aim of the caricaturist—as soon as distortion ceases to yield emphasis to the individuality it has passed the mark, and where there has been an excess of effort the whole force may be wasted, and the object defeated—as in billiards, where a well-aimed shot rebounds from the pocket.

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While it may deal mainly with externals, it is yet capable of close spiritual analysis. It should therefore be sincere, and not a mere trick of enlargement of noses ; a crude idea of caricature which leads back towards the “ ugly valentine ” or “ skit,” happily extinct ; or forwards towards new but similar vulgarities.

In the search for characteristics the subject is isolated from its surroundings and stripped bare of all wrappings. “ In the dark all cats are grey ” is a proverb—caricature turns a searchlight on them, and only grey cats are grey to it. In such a light isolation alone may be sufficiently emphatic—for caricature does not recognize a crowd, but deals only in individuals—seeing not the similarities but the unlikenesses in the most ordinary mortals, enlarging ruthlessly upon the least departure from the norm.

CHAPTER XI

STUDY OF STYLE

IT is advisable that the student should be familiar not only with the work that is being contemporaneously produced, so as to keep abreast of current taste, but should have a wide knowledge of the outstanding work of the past, so that tradition will not be overthrown by the ignorance of it, nor by craze of fashion or prejudice, but only by improvements on it. It is always good for a young student to study the sources and progress of the evolution of a style rather than to accept it as having sprung up out of the earth full grown. He will then be less likely to be run away with or blown over by the "latest thing," but rather to be in advance of it, the newest generally consisting in a harking back to something that had passed out of common knowledge. There is no quotation more generally misapplied than that favourite, "One touch of Nature makes the whole world kin," which in England is given a curiously characteristic twist of sentimentality. The statement is not a complete and general one, but particular—"One touch of Nature makes the whole world kin, That all with one consent praise new born gawds, Though they are made and moulded of things past, And give to dust that is a little gilt, More laud than gilt o'er dusted. The present eye praises the present object"; and Shakespeare puts it into the mouth of the wise Ulysses. This vulgarity can only be

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avoided by knowledge, and without this knowledge a catchpenny and meretricious style may be adopted and found difficult to get out of, like a Cockney and H-less accent. It may not be generally realized that it is possible to draw in a Cockney and H-less manner. Unfortunately it is all too common.

Style dictated by the means employed

The formation of style is of the first importance. Style will be largely the outcome of the instrument employed ; and a good style will almost inevitably be dictated by the instrument itself in so far as appropriateness is concerned if the instrument is sympathetically handled. By this is meant a proper understanding of its limitations, which will lead to a proper respect for them and so prevent the artist from endeavouring to force past the natural barriers these limitations impose. For instance, it is easy to observe in the work of Albert Dürer upon wood how he accepted the natural stroke of the quill pen as the basis of his style ; not sharpening it too finely, as this would have called for constant pressure to obtain the desired thickness, and calling for frequent re-cutting—using it sideways for fine lines and the full breadth of the tip for broad ones, with all the varying breadths in between these extremes to be obtained on a curve without changing the inclination of the pen to the paper. This natural use of the pen, without cross hatching, being also the simplest for the wood-cutter to follow with the knife, yielded the best results the method was capable of, and was never improved upon for line drawing upon wood planks for the wood-cutter.

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Ironic result of Bewick's method

Line drawing on wood for the wood engraver did not call for the same stringency of style. It was unnecessary to economise line with the same care and wise parsimony. Deservedly much as Bewick has been praised for his originality in exploiting the "white



No. 30. Blake. Jerusalem.

line" theory of engraving on wood, it is curious how barren its results have been until recently in the production of fine works in other hands than his own and those of his immediate followers. What had most effect on serious English art was not the white line theory, but the change from the plank block of soft wood to the end grain of hard box, and the use of the burin in place of the knife, which enabled the engraver to follow with much greater accuracy the finest line drawn by

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the artist upon the wood, and to imitate with the utmost minuteness the most intricate cross hatching he might care to employ, a minuteness quite outside the possibilities of the wood-cutter on the plank, with his knife.

It is true that a certain number of engravers did carry on the Bewick tradition and that artists worked



No. 31. Blake. Jerusalem.

with a view to translation by these methods. There is a curious little book, undated but published in 1854 or earlier—it is called *Familiar Fables*, by Miss Corner ; the illustrations are by Alfred Crowquill and James Northcote, Esqs. There are fifty carefully composed little elliptical drawings, surrounded by sloppy decoration in the worst taste of the period. The pictorial part of the design is by Northcote, I suppose, and the sloppiness is supplied by Crowquill ; but the chief interest lies in the masculine vigour of the engraving. It is difficult to know exactly what method of collaboration existed between Northcote and the engraver, or rather engravers. How the drawings were made upon the wood there is little indication. Most probably a mixture of pencil and wash, with line predominant ; but there is hardly more than one example of direct

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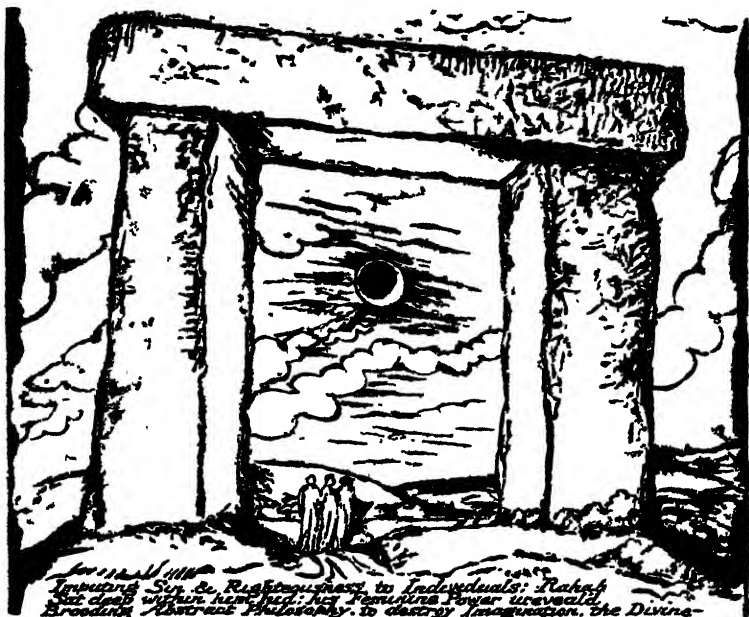
imitation of cross hatching ; and this is very simple. There are several signatures or monograms of engravers—one R. B. (or B. R.), I. Dodd, I. Jackson C. Nesbit, Bonner, T. Mosses, Pears (or Sears ?). There is a general similarity of treatment by all of these, and little to choose between them. Positive black and white are judiciously used, and form throughout is the basis of the direction of the line. A few conventional "textures" or "touches" are employed for the representation of rocks, foregrounds, and distant foliage, but the skies are not ruled ; and unpretentious as the engravings are, have considerable dignity and largeness, being handsome both in the design and the engraving. From the number of the engravers employed and from the uniformity of their methods, it is probable that they worked for a single employer of strong views, or that they had been apprentices in the school of Bewick, and that Northcote himself took pains in supervising the interpretation of his drawings.

It is a pity that, since there was so strong a school of engravers in existence, presumably as late as 1854, carrying on the vigorous tradition of Bewick, that these traditions were allowed to die out, even while wood engraving was a prosperous undertaking ; for long before it was killed by mechanical methods of reproduction it had become an almost entirely mechanical and inartistic "job" for which the engraver himself had lost respect, and was responsible to a large extent for the degradation of black and white even after its decay. It was in the years immediately following that there sprang up a set of artists who, in consequence of that other development in the direction of facsimile,

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made a period, fully covered by fifteen years, a glorious one in the annals of British Art.

Contemporary work was being done by Gavarni in "Le Diable à Paris," dated 1853. The "Contes Drolatiques," which had been first published in 1831,



No. 32. Blake. Jerusalem.

appeared with Doré's illustrations in 1855 ; and a mass of work in a mixed manner, part facsimile, part translation of the artist's work, who took his task in the most light-hearted manner in the world, Gavarni's drawings probably suffering severely enough to induce him to take to lithography with relief, since all, or nearly all, his delicacy of handling is lost by the engraver, in whose hands he is made to appear hardly better

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than a second-rate hack, though the drawings, which appear to have been made with pencil sometimes touched with wash, doubtless shared, if they did not surpass, the delicacy of his lithographs. Doré did not lose so much, as his drawings appear to have been made largely in pen ; a less deceptive medium for the artist



No. 33. Blake. Jerusalem.

to work in, as it gives so much more nearly the effect of a print, for it depends entirely on thickness or thinness of line for its effect, while the pencil will frequently beguile the artist into endeavouring to obtain silvery effects of grey beyond the scope of the engraver and the press to render, no matter how much trouble or skill may be employed. Nevertheless it was in pencil that some of the finest artists worked for the engravers in our best period, but they stuck to the point of the pencil so that at every stroke a clean line was made, and did not use it as a smudging instrument. Where this was done, no matter how delicate and silvery the charm of its effect upon the wood, the "white line"

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engraver, having become more or less of a hack, represented it, if he had the chance, by means of a mechanical ruler, not even troubling to cut it by hand. The little landscape views seen in the magazines of the time, drawn with no matter what feminine charm, were killed dead as a door-nail by the engraver—all look alike, so that it is hard to imagine what interest they can have had even for contemporaries. For us it has evaporated, and the engraver put in nothing of his own to replace it.

Menzel and Facsimile Engraving

By an irony of fate, Bewick had this curious effect on British Art in the main, not by engendering the use of the white line, and so giving the engraver a language of his own and a chance of exercising his wit as an artist and a craftsman in interpretation, but by training him in the skilful use of the burin, made it possible for the artist, while exercising greater freedom himself upon the wood, to demand a closer slavery to the black line from the engraver than from the wood-cutter. This is to be seen in Menzel's "Frederick the Great," where the transition is plainly shown from a certain independence of attitude upon the part of the engravers, who were inclined to give a summary paraphrase rather than the verbatim translation necessary to the work. Menzel appears to have fallen out with the system, and to have insisted upon a microscopic closeness of imitation. A sulky change ensues towards facsimile work, till then never equalled, and since never surpassed, upon the wood block, so close, indeed, that the camera itself has hardly achieved more. The

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varying thickness of the finest and most flexible pen stroke is eventually achieved by the engraver, so that it is difficult to realize that it has been necessary for the engraver to approach it from two sides ; that the black printed line is the result on his part, not of spontaneous ease, but of laborious care, and that in exact proportion to the apparent irresponsibility, tentativeness and fineness of the line, has the engravers' task been the heavier. Menzel had no mercy on them: he made no concessions to the natural genius of the wood by adapting his drawing to what it or the engravers could most naturally yield him. His egoism was magnificent in this respect. They couldn't interpret his work ; well then, that was their look out—they must copy it, and copy it they did. He never seems to have tried to adapt his style to the wood, but demanded from it the fineness of an etching, and got it in spite of everything. He was, in fact, from beginning to end a magnificent Philistine, more really of a scientist than an artist, interested more in facts and things than in thoughts or ideas. Yet it is largely to his dominance over the engravers, and the effect this produced generally upon them, that facsimile engraving came to the pitch it did, and so rendered the work of our men of the sixties safe from ruin by the inefficient engraver.

CHAPTER XII

CONSISTENCY WITH ORIGINAL IMPULSE ESSENTIAL IN ART

DOUBT and hesitancy frequently crop up during the progress of a work. The more mind a man or woman has the more inclined they are to change it from time to time, and to take sides against their own point of view, as a model will rest on one foot after another, alternately. It is a salutary process, but should not be indulged in while a work of art is in progress. Art is a statement not of doubt or hesitancy, but of passion and conviction. It is dogmatic or nothing—"So I saw it—so I felt—so I thought, at the moment when the impulse was upon me to do this." The artist should, therefore, like the runner, have some notion of the distance he will have to run before the race is over, and what sort of strain will be placed upon his powers. An elaborate composition that takes time to carry through should be carefully prepared for, and nothing left to chance, otherwise in the first heat of the impulse the work may be tackled with a fire and energy that lands the artist into difficulties or inconsistencies sometimes so great that nothing but a fresh start will save the idea. Doubts may assail him as to whether the method or style adopted is most suitable to the subject, and if it is gone on with under a spell of mistaken industry, confusion of style may result as though the work were that of two or more separate minds. A notable instance of this was to be seen in Millais'

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picture of "The Woodman's Daughter," an exquisite example of his Pre-Raphaelite manner. In late years he re-painted for some reason, not the whole picture, but the girl only, without being critic enough to see until too late that the method of expression he had developed in the meantime, if not even his habit of mind and vision, had changed. Happily the bulk of the picture was left untouched, but its unity was destroyed, as it would doubtless have been even if the later work had not been as inferior as it is.

This much as to unity of impulse; as to technical unities, every artist might well write up on his easel, "One picture, one sun; One picture, one horizon." As to the first, it is only concerned with the maintenance of unity of lighting, and is simply a warning not to forget the main source of light, as though each member of a group of people carried their independent illuminant about with them and threw their own shadows at their own sweet will.

As for the second rule as to "One horizon," a very well-known artist, less than a week before sending-in day for the Academy, asked me round "just to criticize his perspective for him." He had a picture of some classic subject, a mountainous landscape with probably fifty nude figures standing and lying about upon the mountain side. These figures were all beautifully studied and painted from life, but there was something the matter with the perspective of the mountain, he thought, but he couldn't make out what. Individually there was nothing to find fault with, either with the figures or the mountain; but the picture was a collection of errors. All the figures had been studied

CONSISTENCY WITH ORIGINAL IMPULSE

from models posed upon the throne in the studio from the same point of view, and placed upon the mountain side above, on, or below the horizon, as though such a thing as perspective did not exist for human beings. He realised that figures looked smaller in the distance, but not the equally simple fact that if an upright figure



No. 34. Blake. Jerusalem.

is below you, you can see the top of the head, and if above you, you can see the soles of the feet.

Nothing could save the picture. It was a collection of studies on a single canvas, but not a unit ; and no power on earth could make it one.

An artist of complex and tremblingly balanced character, who looks both inward upon himself and outwardly upon the world, will have an interesting but troubled life in his effort to find due expression for his alternating moods. The pride of the craftsman is hardly to be his, since one half of him almost of necessity will be nagging like a wife at the other. In this quarrelsome frame of mind he may be puzzled to such a degree as to endeavour to satisfy each party

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alternately by throwing sops of treatment to each ; so that a drawing is treated in one manner in one place and differently in another, to such an extent sometimes as to resemble a book of specimens or an old " sample of penmanship." Both or all styles may be admirable in themselves, but the essential unity of style or vision is lost, and we have a polyglot result. An example of this occurs in an admirable drawing by M. J. Lawless, " John of Padua " ; equal skill is shown in every part of the drawing, but the discrepancy between the foreground figures and the background is so marked as to make one suspect, not so much a change of mood on the part of Lawless himself, as the employment of quite another hand. It is no uncommon thing to find this discrepancy of treatment as the result of a mistaken conscientiousness. In this case we feel that the eye has used two different focuses. The effect is worse when the defect is really less obvious, and the eye has focussed separately on all the objects in a composition. There is then no predominance and no subordination of parts, and we get a jumbled result that the eye can disentangle only with difficulty and little satisfaction. It is one of the remarkable triumphs of the Pre-Raphaelite brotherhood and their following that they did in general achieve unity in spite of the myriad detail introduced in full light of day without the aid of a gloomy chiaroscuro. As example take Frederick Sandys' " Morgan le Fay," where an effect of rich warm colour is arrived at, but only by a relentless and calculated pursuit, and careful proportioning of means to a foreseen end which no dashing adventurer could arrive at. This cold, grave passion is a peculiar mark of Sandys.

CHAPTER XIII

FLEXIBILITY OF THE PEN LINE

THE pen consisting of a pliable pair of points has this in common with the brush ; that it is capable of a line that can be thick or thin at will, with all degrees between its finest and its broadest capacity. This gives the pen draughtsman his one small advantage over the etcher, since the etcher's line is not variable in like manner, having to be of the same thickness throughout its length.

Strict line drawing with the pen being even more severely restricted in its means of expression than those legitimately employed in etching, calls for an even greater selective effort upon the part of the artist.

In this connection a common misapprehension may be removed. There is no such thing as a " pen etching." The term " etching " refers generally and properly to the use of the acid employed to bite, eat, or etch away those parts of the metal the absence of which is required for the purpose of the printer.

Steel nibs and quill pens

This flexibility of the pen-points is capable of being used to good effect in rendering the line very supple ; even a hardly perceptible accentuation or diminution of thickness in the length of the line adds to its nervous charm if judiciously used, but anything approaching the writing master's mechanical thin up and thick down

FLEXIBILITY OF THE PEN LINE

stroke, which made sorry our youth with pot hooks and hangers, should be avoided. These were imitated from the work of the scribes who had used their broad cut quill or reed pens in a natural way, obtaining different thicknesses of line by changing the angle at which the pen was presented to the paper without exerting

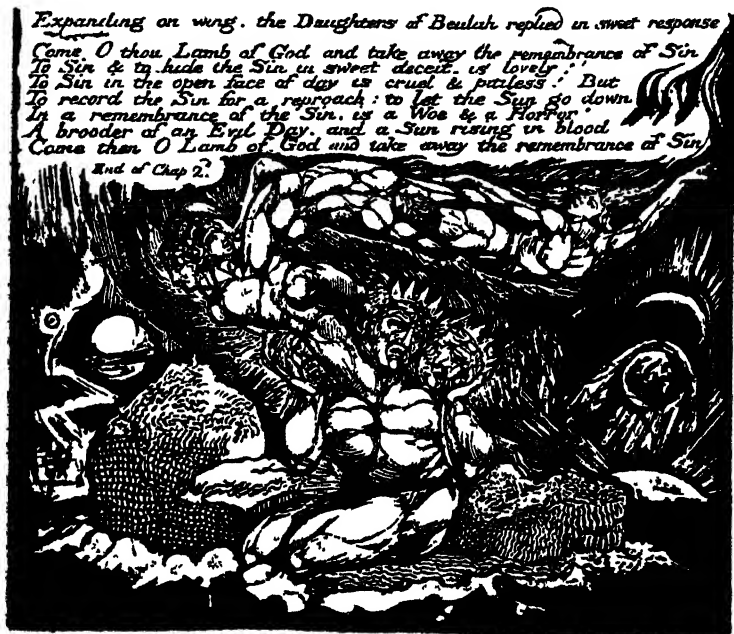


No. 36. Blake. Jerusalem.

pressure, but with the introduction of fine-pointed steel pens the style survived, although the pens were not adapted to carry it out except by the exercise of pressure. The steel nib recovers from pressure better than the quill, so that it was tempting to use it in this manner. An old-maidish style of writing once common may be remembered in which the thick down stroke only survived in the degenerate form of an accent made by a sudden little peck of the pen in the middle of the stroke. Such a use of the pen in drawing brings about an excess of jumpy accents higgledy-piggledy and here and there which distresses the eye and fritters away the large calm of the design without any compensating advantage. Yet nothing can be more exciting than to use the pen or see it used in this manner, where it expresses character and is otherwise appropriate to the subject, as it is a quite natural and proper exploitation of the possibilities of the instrument, yielding more the quality of the dry point where the burr has been

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taken full advantage of than an etched line. It is difficult to maintain unity of effect and strict draughtsmanship by this means throughout an elaborate composition, since it is necessarily a nervously explosive



No. 37. Blake. Jerusalem.

method of expression, and unless spontaneous throughout, must become mechanical, and in consequence dull, except in those jolly but isolated patches where the explosion takes place.

It is wise, therefore, to reserve this technique for such drawings as can be carried through at a sitting, since a nervous draughtsman will find it difficult to "recapture the first fine careless rapture" that seemed

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so gloriously easy while it lasted, and the phlegmatic had perhaps better never begin it, even though he be tempted, since a skittish dulness is the mulish product.

Little was seen of this characteristic use of the pen in the days of the wood engravers, for in the early days quill and not steel pens were used, and in the 'sixties the greater bulk of the work was drawn on the block in pencil. In the work of Bewick and his immediate followers a similar effect to that of the pen laboriously used in this manner is obtained by the natural use of the burin, which, being of a V shape, cuts a line of varying thickness according to the depth of the incision, a fact upon which Bewick and his followers largely based their style. It was not till photographic processes replaced the wood engraver that the pen was generally turned to by artists as giving the best results for direct process, and its possibilities more fully exploited than they had been in drawing for the wood engraver, and the style of the modern pen draughtsman is more usually based upon the steel nib and its flexibility under pressure than upon the quill or reed used without pressure.

CHAPTER XIV

COMPOSITION AND THE PRINCIPLE OF GROUPS

THE principles underlying the harmonious arrangement or grouping of lines are to be derived from nature. It is only necessary to observe how two or more people brought into any relation by a common interest, such as walking together, conversing, reading from the same hymn-book, or watching a balloon will immediately, no matter what their individual differences, form a harmonious group, focussed as they are upon their common interest. When this focus is withdrawn they will relapse from being components of a group ; they become scattered and individual again, irrelevancy of line takes place, and the unity of the group is broken up. It is not, therefore, rule of thumb, but a natural law not to be broken, that the focus of a group is the essential point to establish and the relation of individuals to it, for from this point harmony will radiate. If figures are brought into a natural relation to this they will fall inevitably into a sympathetic arrangement, which is harmony. If the hub of a wheel is broken out the spokes will become individuals united in a common bond of misfortune and to that extent a group; but not the compacted parts of a whole ; if the fellys, too, are broken, the spokes change : they are no longer spokes, but unrelated sticks again.

Antagonism is in itself a relation, and will be

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conditioned by the rule just stated. In so far as the direction of interest is common to antagonists, to that extent they will form parts of a group. They may be united in hatred in such a manner that the line may be almost indistinguishable from that of love. It will be the passionate angularity or rigidity of the line rather than in the main contour that hatred will distinguish itself from the more suave and genial curves of affection. But antagonism of interest is immediately seen in antagonism or contradiction of line, and in a general stiffening of curvature.

Indifference of relation will arise from the dispersal of the foci, giving each individual his or her own pre-occupation regardless of those of others. No matter how tight packed a number of people may be, they are not a crowd, a group, or a unit until they have been welded together by some common focus. Mass or multitude alone does not make a crowd—they may still remain individuals. See any photograph of a football fifteen each intent on his own personality, though all in exactly the same pose and all looking alike. Yet they do not make a crowd. They are fifteen individuals each cut off from his neighbour. On this point there is a saying of Degas in presence of a picture of a multitude of people without cohesion of relationship, which is worth quoting : “ I see fifty people but no crowd—one makes a crowd with five and not with fifty.”

An earnest congregation kneeling in silent prayer is not strictly a crowd : it is a gathering of separate persons in more or less the same attitude, but passionately individual ; a moment later, intent upon the preacher, they have become a crowd held by the same unit of

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interest, with all their many individualities submerged into one. In the theatre there may be one crowd in the stalls, a second in the pit, and a third in the gallery—



No. 38. Blake. Jerusalem.

it is the aim of an actor to weld the entire house into a unit.

So with the artist : having observed the action of these laws, he will have less difficulty in achieving

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unity or harmony in his work, and a higgledy-piggledy dispersal of interest will only appear when this is essential to the subject and under the artist's control.

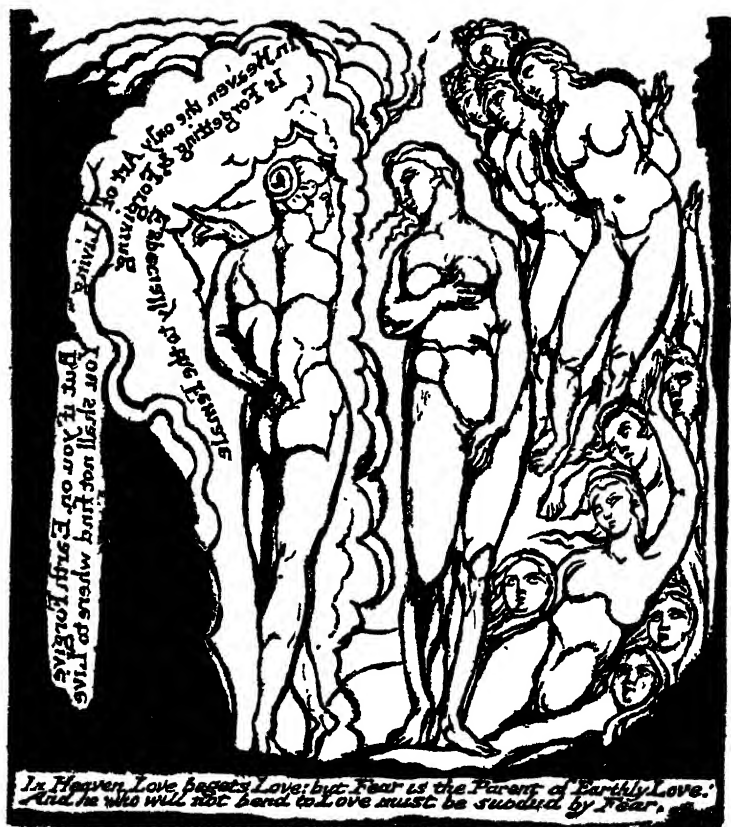
The harmony of figures in a composition will make itself, arising naturally from the situation, and will not be forced upon it. Here we have the underlying rule of true rhythm and balance in figure composition, and a multitude of rules of thumb for their attainment become, in the light of this, tinkering and superfluous.

Composition consists in the arrangement of essentials in harmonious and proportionate relation, so as to form one whole from the component parts.

In making a figure composition a matter of the first importance is that the pattern or silhouette made by the figure or figures shall be of interest in themselves, and well proportioned to and arranged in the space to be filled. No matter how realistic or how decorative the treatment to be adopted, certain principles will equally apply, such as rhythm of line or of interest, correct relation, balance, and subordination of parts. The compositions of Degas, so founded on observation of life, and so startling when first seen, are yet entirely satisfactory from this point of view. The first essential for an artist is interest, and the intensity of his interest will generally determine the quality of the interest of his work for others. It is impossible for the bored person to be creatively interesting. A recital of unselected and unrelated facts in a story is as dull as a ditch, unless the mind of the reciter has in some way been stirred by them. Interest will then communicate itself through the recital to the listener. The main interest of facts is not in themselves alone, but in their

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relation to others. That a man should be six feet high causes no excitement, but that a man should be six feet high in a race of pigmies would be a marvel, not



No. 39. Blake. Jerusalem.

only to his own race but to a race of giants. A pig-tailed mandarin walking in Canton is simply one of a crowd ; but strolling impassively across the cricket pitch on one of our village greens he becomes a dramatic unit, though he is unalterably the same. Likeness may be

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as dramatic as contrast ; even the likeness of twins. One of the most dramatic things ever observed by the writer was when, on a summer's night, a man approached from an opposite direction who, while his figure was visible enough against the reflections of the pavement, had all the appearance of headlessness above the gleam of his collar, until under the lamp as he passed there was the glitter of eyes and the flash of teeth, his face at the moment of passing being the exact tone of the night background. It was only a nigger, to whom circumstances of lighting gave all the uncanny appearance of a headless man walking down Regent Street among the commonplace crowd. The cause of the drama is in each of these cases the same—the unexpected. The relation in which facts are placed to each other will be at least half their interest, so that their degree of likeness or contrast, their quality of rarity or commonness, strangeness or familiarity, is of the greatest importance. To search and find out the particular from the average, and the individual in the type as indicated in Kipling's boast, " I found nought common on Thy Earth," is part of the Science of Art.

Composition

Having decided upon the elements necessary to be introduced into a composition ; for instance, a policeman, a cat, Queen Elizabeth, a geranium, Buckingham Palace, the moon and a bucket, it is necessary to consider the relation between them, and so to arrange these elements that their congruity or otherwise shall appeal to the eye with due emphasis on each fact in relation to its importance in the main scheme. A mere

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cataloguing of the elements without cohesion of interest so that they remain as Lot 1, 2, 3, etc., dumped haphazard upon the paper like relics of a broken home, is not composition—the elements remain disintegrate, no matter how wonderfully expressed as individuals.

Composition is the expression of their relation rather than of their separate identities—the sinking of these in their common lot. This relation has no line of its own by which it is expressed as an entity—it is the sum of the parts which contribute to it—anything in a given space which does not contribute to this unit subtracts from its value. It is of no use to endeavour to bring about unity if this is fundamentally absent by the introduction of minor links—the chain should be of equal strength throughout. A background, no matter how interesting as a unit, is an obtrusive nuisance unless it fulfils its function of being in the background. Queen Elizabeth and the geranium, no matter how exquisite, must take their place if needs be, subsidiary to the policeman and the cat.

Harmony of style and subject matter

It will be found necessary to adapt the technique of illustration to different styles of authorship. The severity of Albrecht Dürer would little harmonize with the sparkling grace of the "Dolly Dialogues." Biblical or religious subjects are too frequently approached with a nerveless technique inanely decorative and characterless, or reconstructive in a dull photographic method—or worst of all, with a falsetto note of sentimentality. Every style will eventually be judged by its sincerity, which may be mistaken in its conviction, but the passion

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of its maintenance will at least make it respectable. Too easy an acceptance of things taught, or of the fashion of the moment, without a study of the roots from which



No. 40. Blake. Jerusalem.

the fashion sprung, or of the basis of the teaching, may lead to the use of a ready-made or second-hand formula that does not fit the personality of the artist, who will appear to be masquerading, until he has evolved a style of his own. At the same time, a style that is more or less elastic, so that it can be stretched in one direction

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or another without too much strain upon it, is a useful asset if it can be achieved.

A method founded primarily upon outline, to which may be added simplified modelling and shadow, but leaving out any elaborate attempt to render surface or minor shades or atmosphere is, I believe, the basis of the finest stylistic draughtsmanship. Complications may be introduced, but it is probable that a strict method of the kind, severe as its limitations are, will satisfy the mind trained in æsthetics more than the most complex.

CHAPTER XV

ON THE USE OF MODELS

THERE is a popular idea that to "do a thing out of your head" is in some way a mark of superiority. A. S. Hartrick, on being asked "How do artists do ideal heads?" replied, "Mostly from models." The novelist of a certain order is fond of a situation in which the artist is in despair until he can find the exact model for some situation, and his epoch-making masterpiece is consequently hanging fire until she (it is generally she) can be found and induced to sit. Something similar is a not uncommon incident in cinema plays. George Eliot's "Romola" is made to turn dramatically upon a painter having surprised an expression of abject terror upon the face of Romola's idol, who is finally broken on her recognizing him in the picture. A most perfect model of girlish innocence and ignorance; fair, with blank, blue eyes, and just budding into womanhood, was posing to me for the first time, and filling my head with the possibility of painting from her a new Annunciation, so exquisitely fresh and virginal was the contour, colour and expression. The rain slashed across the wide studio window; and for something to say, to conceal my thoughts, I made the banal remark: "Wretched weather, isn't it?" "Yes, it's enough ter give yer the Pip!" said my little madonna. I am convinced that had the angel of the Lord announced to her, her only reply would have been "Fancy that!"

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None the less she would have been the most perfect model for the most earnest Pre-Raphaelite, and I always regret my own unpainted picture. The description of a model with a squint and a snub nose as having "the sort of face you'd paint a landscape from" was unkind to the lady, who had a splendid figure.



No. 41. James Northcote, about 1850.
Corner's Fables. Wood engraving. School of Bewick.

I was once interrupted as I was illustrating one of H. G. Wells' stories to see two young women who wished to know if I could give them sittings ; but all my arrangements were made, and the drawings in hand contained little but machinery. " I am sorry," I said, " that I can offer you nothing, unless one of you can pose for a viaduct and the other for a steam engine." They seemed quite glad to escape, but the expression that had passed between them sent me back to the machinery quite happy, so that they did help indirectly with the background.

The use of models is an art in itself, and both the lack of study from life and excessive dependence upon

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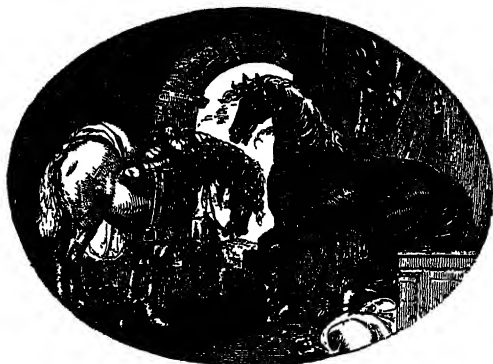
it are equally apparent to the expert eye. A drawing obviously made from "chic," where any trick is resorted to in order to cover up the flimsiness of the construction, is hardly more distressing than the conscientious product which makes a display of laborious and unselected copying of a pose from which all the life has evaporated, and only the model remains.

It is, in fact, rare for a model to contain more than a suggestion of what an artist requires at any given time—they are but animate lay figures as a rule, and there is hindrance as well as help in their employment. Yet to fall into a habit of never using them is as dangerous as too great a dependence upon them. In the one case errors of construction and an air of unreality may become habitual from being unchecked ; in the other, a stiffness and lack of movement—paradoxically a lack of "life" may come about from the regular employment of the living model.

The best manner of their employment will doubtless vary not only with the character of the work in hand, but with the temperament and preferences of the artist, and even of the model employed. As a general rule, it will probably be found best to make the first sketches of the composition without reference to the model at all, depending upon what knowledge of the figure the student may already possess, getting all the vigour and spontaneity of movement possible into the preliminary work. The model may then be called in and posed as nearly as possible to the position or positions already sketched out, when it can readily be seen if there are any gross errors in the construction, and if such or such a position is an impossibility, or

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can be improved upon. It will, of course, frequently be the case that the model cannot be posed fully in the position it is desired to represent ; but if the figure has been logically constructed and in due perspective in the sketch, it will not generally be found a matter of much difficulty to study the model part by part in



No. 42. James Northcote. Corner's Fables.

such a way as to correct and improve upon the sketch by rendering it convincing. The main danger to be avoided is the risk of losing the movement of the sketch, and making the composition stiff and wooden. This is a defect frequently observable in the work of otherwise capable artists, who work from their models in such a manner that, even when they are shown as in violent action, they seem to be standing stock still—"struck like it"—like the figures in a *tableau vivant* praying for the curtain to come down and release them.

Paul Renouard and the life

The excellence of the work of Paul Renouard is dependent largely upon his practice of drawing everything

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direct from life, and yet, while rarely employing professional models for his purpose, managing to keep the prime movement and correct relation throughout a complicated group, no matter what the action. In spite of the fulness of his presentation, it is always kept vivid and dramatic in the best sense, yet it appears



No. 43. James Northcote Corner's Fables.
These are full-size reproductions.

so simple that an inexpert artist might think he had nothing more to do than to draw as conscientiously as Renouard to reproduce his effects.

That truth to life demands something more than a simple capacity for accurate draughtsmanship is a fact he will soon discover, and that for all its fulness of acceptance there is an extraordinary amount of rejection in Renouard's work, and a more alert sense of pattern involved than in rug making. It is, I believe, the pattern that the living and moving Kaleidoscope makes upon his eye that is generally the prime motif in Renouard's work, and that, having noted this pattern, the filling it with complex life is for him, though laborious, a simple task. His composition has a unity with

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the types he introduces, because he does not "make" his compositions in the ordinary way, but "observes" them, as he observes the types he draws, and never forces his characters into a plot, or foists a plot upon his characters, like an unskilful playwright, but gets both from the same source—life itself—at one and the same time in a single operation of the mind. He has no *parti-pris*, and it is remarkable that his drawings of English types are vividly English to an English eye, and never the stock "Englishman" of an out-of-date French convention, which remains hardly recognizable to an Englishman, any more, doubtless, than our stage or cartoonist's "Frenchman" resembles anything under the sun.

The methods of Paul Renouard are difficult or impossible for much of the work that most illustrators have to carry out, so much of this work consisting in the creation of imaginary scenes and characters in order to make them vivid to the eye, as the actor does with the work of the dramatist; and not taking his subject so directly from life. The famous jibe at the politician who was said to rely upon his memory for his jests and his imagination for his facts, might with no more than the slightest turn lose all its asperity and apply as a whole-hearted compliment to the illustrator.

He has to combine the factors of his composition—to create them on paper, either from memory or more generally, by that process of logical deduction working from premises half of fact and half of fancy, which is called imagination. The Editor's final word, "By Tuesday morning, 9 o'clock, certain," gives a great jog to invention that everyone who has worked for the

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press recognizes with a mixture of curse and blessing. But for such work it is impossible to retain the services of a bearded and portly Falstaff, a clean-shaven Prince Hal, a Doll Tearsheet, a Bardolph, and a Dame Quickly at a moment's notice to pose at intervals during the small hours. If a model is employed at all that model, man or woman, will most probably serve for the lot ; in fact, in turn, the entire *dramatis personæ*. A fold here, the pose and construction of a hand there, the turn of a head, may be snatched ; and a pretty girl is as good a model under such conditions for Bardolph's nose as any other person likely to turn to " modelling " as a profession ; with one pillow artfully arranged she may pass for Dame Quickly ; and with two for Falstaff.

Henry James founded a delicately amusing story upon the idea of some charming and proud old gentleman in reduced circumstances offering his services to a black and white artist as the " Real, Right Thing " ; but the story turns to a deep pathos on the discovery that a little Italian waiter with the dramatic instinct was much more inspiring to the artist. It is indeed rare in fact, though painfully common in fiction, for an artist to rely for " inspiration " upon the discovery of some particular type of face in life for the creation of his " masterpiece " of imaginative work.

" Modelling " is a hard-working and highly respectable profession, about which much nonsense has been thought and written by ignorant persons.

Phil May's Method

As is well known, Phil May's method in the use of a model was to make a careful and full study in pencil or

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chalk for each figure in a composition, and in re-drawing this to select from the full study only such lines as he thought essential, being more pleased with the work according to the amount of simplification he could bring about without sacrifice of effect. All apparent labour was thereby done away with, the truly "finished" work having the appearance of a sketch, while the preliminary studies were often full of what is more generally looked on as "finish," which is often only unnecessary polish, or the introduction of a superfluous detail ; which in his case would have detracted from the general effect of the work. This is also the Japanese method. Later he dispensed to a large extent with the making of separate studies, working direct from the model upon the composition previously sketched in, in the manner already described ; but he never dispensed with his sketch book, so that his types of character were always fresh—even the subsidiary figures in the most crowded scene standing for something observed, and never being a mere padding out of an otherwise empty space.

Menzel's Studies

Menzel was a tireless student, making studies of everything—of the various ways in which a hand adapts itself in resting upon a sword or a walking-stick, slight variations in the turn of a head—and so on endlessly, his attention being arrested by the commonest objects, even to the making of studies of the successive dishes placed before him at dinner. Facts were to him the food and salt of life, and all came alike to him from Frederick the Great to the gaiter button of a grenadier.

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His work shows no concern with beauty, which he probably thought synonymous with prettiness—but all objects came alike to his gourmandizing and prodigious appetite. His industry in getting them stated on paper must have been unceasing. A waiter in a Soho restaurant once said of Menzel, “ Ah, he make study !



No. 44. James Northcote. *Corner's Fables*.
The designer and engravers show fine collaboration.

—ah, yes—but he never finish.” Menzel certainly did make a vast number of drawings of unrelated facts, apparently from an encyclopædic love of them for their own sake. There is a story told of him at a State Ball, that on the Emperor asking him if he would like any particular person to pose for him, he selected a great lady of the court, who was highly flattered, and posed steadily for a long time, having to forego all her dances. On asking to see the artist’s work, she found that he had drawn nothing but just so much of her elbow as would show the fall of the lace upon it, and Meyer was quite unconscious of having given cause for
fury.

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False "grace"

We frequently see in the effort to achieve feminine grace that the arms are drawn in such a manner that even the straight bones are curved to avoid an angle at the elbow, so that the humerus and forearm appear like a festoon hanging between the shoulder and the wrist. Of course in a flippant and artificial production it may prove very amusing, where it is part of the artist's fun, but seriously to imagine that grace is achievable by such means is mistaken.



No. 45.
Gustave Doré.
Contes Drolatiques.
Wood engraving.
Full-size reproduction.

A model once told how, as a little boy in the country, he had read all his sister's *Family Herald Supplements*, wherein the lords and ladies were described as having teeth of pearl, alabaster foreheads, shell-like ears, coral and ruby lips, agate eyes, and so on ;

and that it was not till after he was a full-grown man that he realized that Peers and Peeresses were of a like flesh and blood with ordinary mortals, though even then a doubt remained as to the blueness of their blood.

Grace cannot be achieved by the artist by such falsifications ; the most graceful creature has rigid bones under her skin, and the most ethereal intercepts light efficiently and throws as dark a shadow as Jack

30n.

CHAPTER XVI

PHIL MAY AND BEARDSLEY

IN studying the work of Phil May, the first thing noticeable is how much of value he put into it by a process of leaving out. It is as though he put his extraordinary amount of observation into a sieve, and riddled away everything but what was essential to his purpose. Concision of statement was characteristic of his mind : he disliked long legends beneath his drawings, wishing them to require as little accompanying letter-press as possible, and that the drawing itself should convey the jest. A well-known drawing of his in an early " Annual " was that of a lion-tamer who has returned home after a spree, and, being afraid of his termagant wife, has locked himself into the lion's den. The wife is shown outside the cage with a bedroom candlestick. " You Coward ! " is the legend. He thought the " You " unnecessary, and regretted that the " Annual " had gone to press with it. His conversation was staccato rather than fluent, at all times.

He had very keen, clear sight, and saw people as individuals rather than as " types," and aided his retentive memory by perpetual sketching wherever he was. Though he never scribbled, but always drew with definite and clear intention, he filled piles of sketch books big and little, and covered reams of paper trying over ideas. Large as is the mass of his published work, the bulk of sketches and studies made for it was

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immense ; but of this he destroyed a great deal as he went along. Even so, collectors should be upon their guard against forgeries, many of which, even to completely filled sketch books, passable to the unwary, may be met with.

Superficially, Phil May's work, like Beardsley's, is quite easy to imitate. Both are dangerous in that way to a young student who gets bitten with a too exclusive admiration for either of them, without going through the schooling that the one derived from life itself, the other from art ; the product alone should not be taken as a guide without studying the mental processes involved in the production. To produce a real " Phil May " the study should be from life, more than from one of his drawings, and, if this is done, the student will be able to stand firmly upon his own feet.

In view of Blake's appreciation of Hogarth, it is interesting to place in juxtaposition with him Phil May and his work, which it is easy to imagine he would have appreciated still more as being more nearly, even than Hogarth, his artistic counterpart. I had almost said " spiritual " as well as artistic, — but spiritually as men they had more in common than appears on a superficial glance—but, as Blake saw not the tree, but the Dryad, so in Phil May he would have seen the spirit of universal sympathy, pity and love which was the burden of his own message. Phil May was gregarious and concrete in his appreciation of his kind, loving men and women, where Blake was a solitary and abstracted soul loving mankind. Blake was a moralist, while Phil May might be said to be none at all, and yet Phil May, in a certain sense, was Blake's ideal man. He was happily born in

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that he had no malice in his blood. An injury to Blake was resented passionately, though forgiveness was the central tenet of his creed ; with Phil it was allowed to run off like water from a duck ; or, when most felt, was shaken off, as a dog shakes himself dry. Blake was always neglected and poor : Phil was even too much run after, and perhaps " his spirit worked, lest arms and legs want play." He made a good income, but was too easily generous and was always " hard up "—Blake made next to nothing, yet was probably never in debt. Blake, while " not easily jealous," was irascible, touchy, and combative, where Phil was perhaps too easily acquiescent and genial. Much more often than Blake, Phil had occasion to say :

" Thy friendship oft hath made my heart to ache,
Do be my enemy for friendship's sake."

Yet this fiercest of all epigrams Blake said once for all to the more or less inoffensive Hayley ; Phil never said it to any one of the crowd of worse than Hayleys who surrounded him, sponging, flattering, and spoiling him. Blake's work suffered from a defect of life lived in fellowship with the common run of mankind, just as Phil's suffered from excess. But between this completeness of contrast we get almost the entire range of expression in illustrative art. It was my happy fortune to become well acquainted with the work of Blake as a schoolboy, and at about twenty-one to form an intimate friendship with Phil May that lasted from the time I first met him when he was five or six and twenty until his death.

It is almost a pity that Phil, with all his knowledge

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of historic and modern costume and his interest in it, the stage, and the dramatic side of life as he saw it lived, for which he had so quick an eye, should have



No. 47. Gustave Doré. Contes Drolatiques.

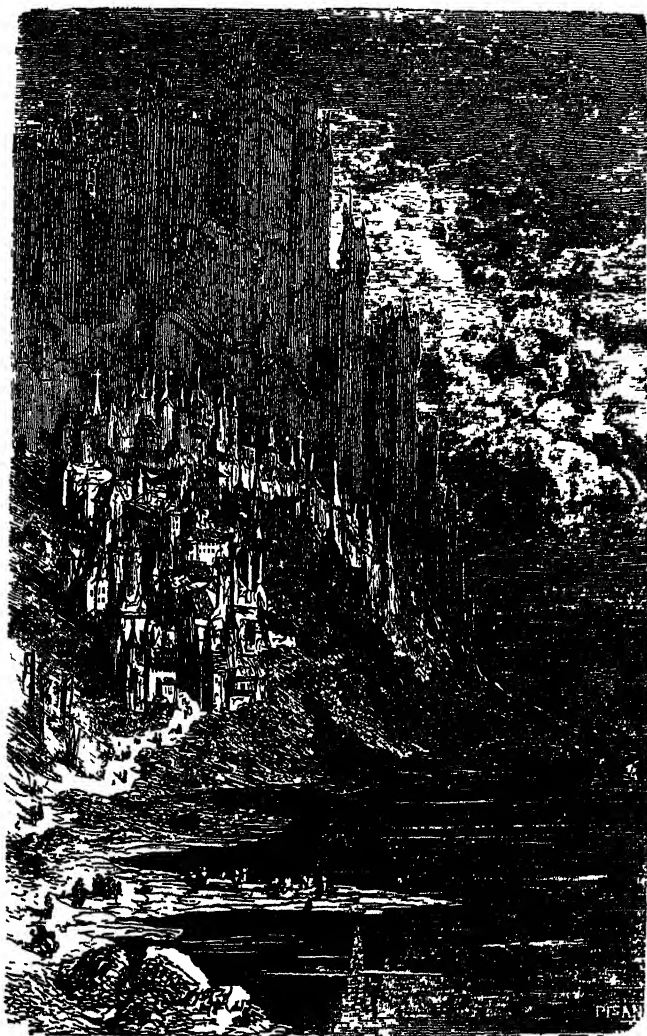
left practically no book illustrations, nearly everything he did being printed in ephemeral publications, unbound or simply paper-covered, so that it is already

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becoming rare in its original state. On his death selections of his work were collected and republished in book form, but the "Parson and the Painter" (which was itself a paper-covered selection from his work in the *St. Stephen's Review*) must have fallen to pieces and been thrown away except for stray copies here and there. Some people were wise enough to bind up the "Annuals"; "Guttersnipes" was in thin boards, so stood a better chance of survival than most of his work, and as it contains some of his best, freest, and most mature this is lucky.

Time brings about its revenges in this way: Blake was never the public idol that Phil May was; his work was never spread broadcast, yet every rare scrap that he did is now ticketed and catalogued; while Phil's lavish and popular output has now dwindled by the wastage of Time into a scarcity that before long may match that of Blake, though the original drawings of course remain.

Blake, so far as his art is concerned, shows an almost entire lack of humour, his mind being preoccupied with the abstract and eternal, regardless of the things of every day, regarding time as an unbroken unit. For Phil it was the perpetual change and bustle of night and day, and the turning of one into the other in the wearying search for fun that wore him out. At heart he was as sad a man as Blake was happy, but it is the fun of the spectacle that he gives, seen through his kindly and pitying, but hopeless, eyes; while Blake, looking inward, finds terror and solemnity unlit by a gleam of humour, but always with the shining hope that the New Jerusalem shall be built "in England's



No. 48. Gustave Doré. Contes Drolatiques.
Doré had a special gift for expressing great size in a small space,
see particularly Nos. 49 and 50.

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green and pleasant land," whereas "My Strand" was the land of Phil May's heart's desire.

To go back—it was Phil May who should have illustrated Chaucer and not Blake nor Stothard—and what an inimitable series could he have made of drawings to Shakespeare's comedies from his unrivalled knowledge of human types and characters, his power over the expression of face and figure, and his remarkable sense of "situation." It should not be overlooked that while many so-called humorous artists are supplied with "jokes" to which they simply make "conversation" drawings more or less appropriate, Phil May was in the main his own jester, and that the humour of the legend is almost invariably on all fours with the drawing, being direct from life and its daily happenings, with only the same spice of caricature to give it immediate force and enough to remove it from the banality of common experience unfiltered through a selective mind. Something would strike him in the talk which he would seize, and with a twist of fancy lift into the realm of the comic or the absurd. I once asked him if he ever dreamed a joke. Many a time, he said, things amused him in dreams, but they were no good in the morning, and that the only one he ever used was that of a toper lying in the street with "(Hic!) jacet" as legend.

There is a curiously prevalent notion, even among those who most enjoy a humorous drawing, that because it is humorous it is by that much less as a work of art. It is far more easy to draw a dozen backboneless, long-robed figures in wings with characterless faces, playing archaic fiddles with the bow sideways across

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the keyboard, than to draw a Cockney child running away from a policeman and chaffing him as he runs. Yet the one, though nobody is moved by it in any way, is regarded dutifully as high art because of its subject ; and the more difficult performance, which takes everyone between the ribs, is passed over, no matter how finely observed, arranged and characterized, as of less account, simply because it is funny. Presumably in some such spirit people would sometimes say to Phil May, " Why don't you do something serious ? " His comment was, " If you're going to be serious you've got to be so damned good."

" Serious " he was on occasion where his sympathies were touched. But, as though shy of anything approaching sentimentality, it was rarely that he allowed rein to his pathetic humour, though it is not difficult to find examples of it. The little written foreword to " Gutter-snipes," which contains a note of slightly false and specious pathos, was suggested by the publisher. He had simply copied it out.

He had walked every day for a week from his studio in Holland Park Road to the *Graphic* Office, close to the Law Courts. " What a saving in hansoms ! " I said. " Yes, but think of the crossing-sweepers," he replied, and there was less than half a jest intended. I have no doubt whatever that it cost him much more to walk than to drive. Of sympathy of this kind plenty can be found in his work.

The nearest popular immortal to compare him with that I can think of is Burns. While his method of expression hardly varied, having been set for him largely by his environment, like the language of a native

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country, he yet made his monosyllabic style of noun and verb extraordinarily elastic, seeing all things with a fresh eye and giving out what he sees in the "Volapuk" of line. His humour has to a large extent gone into the language. Those clean-cut yet kindly summaries of life which he made from week to week and from day to day have become part of the general possession, like that of Burns.

His influence on "black and white" is still traceable in England and Australia, where he worked; increasingly and to the good, as the underlying principles of his art rather than the temporal accidents of appearance become more absorbed, and this influence can only be to the good.

Beardsley

Facts existed for Beardsley no more than as he would have them; Nature "put him out." He liked the world well aired, not crude and raw; solid facts got in the way, and were a stumbling block in so entirely artificial and amusing a world. If a physical fact was ugly it had to be dismissed, or at least, charmingly put—its sting drawn and made amusing and unreal. Apart from the line of pattern he was an insecure draughtsman. Pattern deals in length and breadth alone; "thickness" introduced a factor he never succeeded in mastering; so that when, as he does on occasion, he suggests light and shade or modelling, it is generally with timidity, and his unity fails. His style at its purest depends upon rhythm of line and balance of pattern, half tones of



No. 49.
Gustave Doré.
Contes Drolatiques.
Compare this drawing with No. 50.



No. 50. Gustave Doré. Contes Drolatiques.
This drawing, though it has more detail, is hardly "larger" than No. 49.

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colour being arrived at by a free use of ornament upon costumes, furniture or hangings, a dotted line being frequently resorted to where a full line would have come out of place and jumbled the objects in the composition.



No. 51. Gustave Doré.
Contes Drolatiques.

There are indications in his later work of an endeavour to enrich his technique, as though he was beginning to chafe under the restraint of a style so limited in its powers of objective expression. It rejected what sometimes he wished to include. He wrote with as much delicate artificiality as he drew, and made as pretty arabesques of fancy, his work being all of a piece. There is something illuminating in the passage to which one of his best drawings is

an illustration: "Would to heaven," he sighed, "I might receive the assurance of a looking-glass before I make my debut! However, as she is a Goddess, I doubt not her eyes are a little sated with perfection, and may not be displeased to see it crowned with a tiny fault."

"A wild rose had caught upon the trimmings of his ruff, and in the first flush of displeasure he would have struck it brusquely away and most severely punished

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the offending flower. But the ruffled mood lasted only a moment, for there was something so deliciously incongruous in the hardy petal's invasion of so delicate a thing, that Fanfreluche withheld the finger of resentment and vowed that the wild rose should stay where it had clung—a passport, as it were, from the upper to the under world.”

“The very excess and violence of the fault,” he said, “will be its excuse,” and, undoing a tangle in the tassel of his stick, stepped into the shadowy corridor that ran into the very bosom of the wan hill—stepped with the admirable aplomb and unwrinkled suavity of “Don John.” (“Under the Hill,” *The Savoy*, No. 1).

This is as near to nature as he ever got, and it is just possible that it unconsciously conveys the hint of an almost sentimental regret in the highly self-conscious artist.

CHAPTER XVII

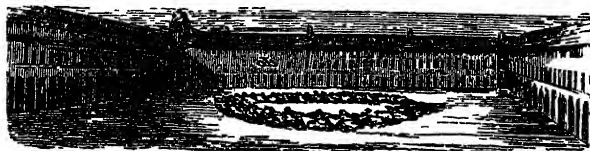
BOTTICELLI AND PROGRESSIVE INTEREST

BOTTICELLI made a series of drawings to illustrate the works of Dante—the “Inferno,” the “Purgatorio,” and the “Paradiso.”

The “Inferno” appears to have been too fierce a subject for the suave and gentle spirit of the artist, who, while not shrinking from it, treats it in a curiously untouched and naïf manner, as something far off and not realized, quite unlike the text. There are, to be sure, flames and thorns and devils, all rather bogeyish and quaint; so that the torments of the damned, as he shows them, are calculated to wring a smile, rather than a sympathetic twinge, from the spectator, as they hardly convey the idea of suffering or terror. A Chinese torturer would think little of them, and any illustrated version of Foxe’s Book of Martyrs would put them in the shade. A normally humorous mind with a dash of brutality rather than of polished cruelty may find something lacking which it would itself have to supply. His devils and the sufferings of the damned are simply fancies; his imagination and his sympathies are expressed rather in the way in which he follows the effect upon Virgil and Dante in their passage through the many scenes of suffering depicted. In these two figures he becomes almost realistic at times, and in this, probably unconsciously, displays his own pitiful attitude. He introduces them again and again in the same

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composition passing through varied emotions from one incident to another ; in one drawing they appear as many as seven times. Their appearance and reappear-



No. 52. Gustave Doré. *Contes Drolatiques*.
Notice, "etc." (in reverse) to indicate more windows than are engraved.

ance in this way give a curious sense of continuity, not only to the somewhat slack composition of the separate designs, but to the whole series. Interesting as these drawings are as a sidelight upon Botticelli's art and mind, they are hardly to be taken as objects of study for composition or method of presentment ; they have the appearance of being only partially thought out by him, and cannot be regarded as final in their form. There is a lack of economy of space ; figures are scat-



No. 53. Gustave Doré. *Contes Drolatiques*.
Notice in all these head and tail pieces (reproduced full size) the amount of space expressed and the dramatic force of the tiny figures.

tered and sprinkled about higgledy-piggledy by simple multiplication without condensation of interest, predominance or subordination of one thing to another.

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The result is flatness ; the attention is squandered on the bundle of hay in its search for the needle in it.

The device of introducing Virgil and Dante several times processionally in one composition is interesting



No. 54. Gustave Doré. Contes Drolatiques.

as an example of the effort to overcome the natural limitation of pictorial art to a given instant in time, and to a single point of view, which appears from a literary review (*Saturday Westminster*, Sept. 18th, 1920) to have been common enough. "... a portrait, though it betrays character, and often has what painters, speaking technically, call movement, cannot really speak, and except in the primitive days when one saint could be and often was shown being eaten and disgorged by the same dragon in the same picture, a



No. 55. Gustave Doré. Contes Drolatiques.

BOTTICELLI AND PROGRESSIVE INTEREST
portrait does not show its subject in more than one place."

In modern days this progressive interest has been generally disallowed by purists as hardly proper to pictorial art. There can be no doubt that it is inadmis-



No. 56. Gustave Doré. Contes Drolatiques.

sible if the subject is realistically treated ; but in the presentation of an idea the same objection cannot hold with the same force.

Recording impressions of movement. Difference between the eye and the camera

The qualification "at a given moment of time" must be pressed home as marking in the main the difference between the art of the illustrator and of the narrator or musician. Literature and music are progressive and cumulative, while pictorial art is static.

In so far as it aims at producing an emotion as nearly as possible similar to that received by the artist through the eye from life itself, it will give a result not far removed from that of an instantaneous photograph ; yet with certain important modifications. In the case of the camera an instantaneous exposure is made comparable to the opening and immediate closing of the

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eye ; and in the momentary interval between the two a complete image of all the facts in front of the lens is recorded. The brain is not so rapidly receptive a recorder as the camera, and does not, having received an impression, dispose of it as rapidly as it has been received. In the case of an impression from rapidly moving objects there is an appreciable period of time in which their appearance is still retained upon the retina, even while the vision is recording fresh impressions, so that overlapping of memory and active vision takes place, and a certain confusion results between the two—the memory remaining after the action has taken place.

The reader can prove this for himself by moving his hand up and down from the wrist so rapidly as to see a hand at each end of the movement and a blurred succession of hands in between. The slight pause at the end of each movement gives the brain time to grasp the appearance of the hand, but the intervening movement is so rapid as to be recorded only as a semi-transparent blur, where an indistinct and rapidly fading streak is left upon the retina, and the background is only half realized. Suppose a camera to be exposed while the hand is midway in its movement, the hand will appear, not as it does to the eye, partially only, but distinctly ; more distinctly even than the eye records at the moment of the slight pause when the movement of the hand is reversed, and moreover, the background will be comparatively unaffected. It is worth pointing out that in this matter the camera does not show the artist to be in error in his observation, as is popularly supposed to be the case, but only that the

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camera and the brain record at different speeds, and that the camera has no memory to complicate the impression.

In such a case the artist will probably choose for



No. 57. Menzel. Frederick the Great. Early facsimile.
Wood engraving. Menzel's counterpart is Beardsley.

record the hand at the moment when his eye records the completest impression; that is, at the moment of arrested movement, when the hand is at the turn.

In the case of a galloping horse, he has been accustomed to use a convention based upon a series of impressions received at more than a single instant of time,

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so that each limb is shown at the moment of arrested movement; and the artist's convention frequently goes nearer to visual truth than the camera's record of a fact too momentary to be fully recorded individually by the brain, but only as an infinitesimal component part of an indistinct blur or streak.

It has been unusual for the artist to go out of his way to make attempts at recording such impressions, though it has been and is done ; and it yields a certain interest to observe how the problem is solved, as this affords a clue to the artist's preoccupation with the relative significance of the object that is moving, and the appearance of its movement. A fluttering bird frequently gives the impression to the eye of having four or more wings, and I remember being struck with the truth of a representation of this impression in a picture by so very conservative an artist as the late Lionel Smythe. In certain " futurist " pictures I have seen attempts scientifically to record such impressions of movement. One of these was a highly interesting and ambitious attempt at recording on a large scale the effect of a crowd of dancing figures. But such attempts, no matter how the skill of the artist may be called upon to analyse and execute them, deal rather, perhaps, with the science of optics than with æsthetic vision. To the curious they are full of interest, and, because they may open up new paths of delight in beauty or interest, are therefore not lightly to be dismissed or discouraged. At the same time, it is amusing to notice that so honest an attempt at recording a quite ordinary vision of moving objects is apt to stir the derision of critics and ignorant people alike, who are unaccustomed to the

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analysis of their own most ordinary sensations, and look at life always through some convention that has been imposed upon them. The present trend of art, however, seems to be away not only from exact recording



No. 58. Menzel. Frederick the Great.

of appearances as in a group of still life, but even from the more subtle record of the impression made upon the eye, which had so filled the artistic horizon.

Present tendencies

This tendency expresses itself in various ways. The artist has found that no amount of labour can compete in literalness with a simple snap-shot, and that his business lies not in a full or even direct recording of the external facts observed by him, so much as in the manner of their presentation. Fulness of record for its own sake has ceased to yield any interest, and the labour involved, which at one time was a cause of

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admiration, is now rather provocative of a certain pitying wonder at its obstinacy. Selection of essentials, involving the rejection of all that is insignificant, and their effective and appropriate presentation, is having its turn again after a long period during which the public was inclined to look rather for the trivialities and trimmings of "likeness" or prettiness than for its firm grasp of truth or beauty. "Likeness," in fact, even in inessentials, and a falsified Prettiness, had become synonyms for Truth and Beauty.

CHAPTER XVIII

SANDYS AND BOYD HOUGHTON

FOLLOWING closely upon the Pre-Raphaelites with their devoted and high-minded fastidiousness came the school of domestic illustrators of the Sixties—aiming in general not so high, and taking their task with a lighter heart. Millais himself relaxed, and most of his work in later days was of less importance than that of Sandys, Houghton and Keene of the same time. The charm of this work lay largely in its robustious common sense, and common humanity. There was a full acceptance of things and people as they are without any affectation of high art, or that things are other to an artist than to other mortals except in the greater intensity of the artist's interest. The world they lived in was good enough for them—and no art too good or "high" to express their view of it. There was a healthy and simple relish about the way they took life—so that the affectations and languors of the Eighties and the decadence that marked the Nineties form a strange sequel to so full-blooded a parentage. The art of the Sixties had been the most British—even the most English—expression yet found since Hogarth, although of the Pre-Raphaelite leaders Millais, John Bullish as he was in appearance, being a Jerseyman, was presumably predominantly French in blood—Rossetti was half Italian. The influences they had first chosen were mediæval and foreign. But Pinwell,

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Houghton, Pettie, Keene, Lawless, Mahoney were all British, and, with the exception of Sandys, submitted to no influence in art that was not already rooted in England, and drew their inspiration direct and almost



No. 59. Menzel. Frederick the Great.

entirely from the life of the time, preferably even in the choice of their subject matter.

It is curious to turn up the subject matter of many of the finest drawings of the Sixties in order to study what inspiration they could find in the text supplied. For instance, in spite of the renown of Borrow at the present day, and his pride as a linguist, philologist or translator, it would be safe to wager that ten literary men who know and admire Sandys' drawing, "Harold Harfagr," to one who knows what it illustrates.

orrow's translation is as flat and unfinished as Sandys' illustration is still breathing and living art—one of the

SANDYS AND BOYD HOUGHTON

perfect and impressive compositions that this world has produced. In spite of Sandys' obvious and general debt to Dürer, he appears in this drawing freer from any outside influence than is usual with him ; and for once, for all his restraint, to have been almost evenly swayed by intellect and emotion. Not a line went astray, no detail obtruded itself, nor did the interest of the mass call for its suppression. In spite of the severity of the line which makes itself felt throughout, and all the underlying austerity, there is a weight and solemnity of



No. 60. Menzel. Frederick the Great.
Menzel was a tireless student of fact,
hands especially.

tone that conveys all the richness of sunset colour, and the sound the gravity and dignity of an organ.

The sympathies of Sandys are spread evenly over living and inanimate objects, and he presents them to us with an impartial precision. His style is undisguisedly modelled upon that of Dürer—even the signature at times shows traces of the influence—but he remains curiously self-possessed, as though even in his most consistent admiration his is a bloodless and regulated passion of the mind rather than of the heart.

The art of Boyd Houghton offers an interesting subject for comparison with that of Sandys. Nothing could be more hearty and vigorous in attack, nor more human in sympathy. His love of children, of the healthy beauty of woman, of youth and old age, his delight in

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fantastic character, his joy in the jolly rotundity of a man in a train, of the Emperor of China, or of Sancho Panza, no less than in the leanness of Don Quixote—his acceptance of the decorative value of the curly Victorian furniture and the crinoline, his delight in glorious masses of flowing hair, point to a full, even at times a riotous, enjoyment of the passing show, in which his sympathies gave him an actual part, rather than made him a detached spectator. His work gives evidence of an unfailing interest in oddities of character or pose : he seizes upon what an academic mind regards as negligible or casts aside as waste. His power of dramatic representation of emotion is unsurpassed. The languishment of Beder in love, the abandon of the Remorse of Camaralzaman, the pathos of the death of the old gardener, the passion in the meeting of the Prince and Badoura, the tenderness of "My Treasure," are fine examples. He fills the allotted space of his design in such a way as to appear not only to enrich it with life and colour, but definitely to expand it, as though the surrounding line were the sash of a window through which we look out upon the world he would take us into. There is no drawing more perfect in its kind in the world than the tiny masterpiece, "Tom, Tom, the Piper's Son." The piper is a figure to haunt a dream ; his skinny, avaricious knuckles, the row of malicious teeth, and the glitter of his eyes, are a miracle of appreciative draughtsmanship. Throughout not a touch goes astray either in character or rhythm, which are here blended in a manner inspired. The original drawing, which I have had in my hand many times, always impressed me as being remarkable for its

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largeness of handling on so tiny a scale, no more than $3\frac{1}{2}$ in. by 5 in. In a reproduction we have grown so used to a factitious delicacy achieved by reduction that it is remarkable how this drawing can hold its own in this



No. 61. Menzel. Frederick the Great

very particular against drawings so reduced. So far from gaining, it would undoubtedly lose by reduction ; but it would make a nobly decorative design enlarged to life size, as it would be impossible to dispose light, mass, and tone to better advantage.

The grasp, vigour, and unflagging interest he displays are extraordinary. There is never a lifeless composition of models to be found—the note is always personal and has always a direct appeal to the eye. He never relies only upon his skill as a draughtsman to carry him through, but puts all his heart into the work

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in hand without shirking. Rapid or careless he may be, but never listless or inert. His hand is never busy while his mind is asleep, but he gives us the sense of harmonious and instant co-operation between the two and a zest and relish which we partake with him.

Cross hatching

Technically remarkable is his fertility of resource and mastery of cross hatching, in which he indulges freely where it will serve his purpose. It is always bold and luminous, and he manages to avoid what may be called the "flicker," which distresses the eye, not only in a pen drawing, but more still in the case of reproduction on zinc or copper, where it is frequently emphasized by the acid. A fine example to study for the variety and range of luminous tone is the "Saint's Story." It is to be remembered that the draughtsman on wood and the wood engraver have not the resources of surface printing at command to suppress the jumpiness of the squares and diamonds of white in their cross hatching that the etcher has, so that more demand is made upon his judgment in the laying of a tone. It is worth noticing that where the light falls direct upon an object, cross hatching has not been employed, except in one place to give texture to a material. The sense of bright moonlight upon varying surfaces of stone, upon the silken costume of the kneeling figure, and upon the frieze habit of the gaunt monk, is expressed with remarkable subtlety, yet in the simplest manner by more or less parallel lines of varying thickness taking generally the direction of the form. The thicknesses of these lines and their proportion to the white space between

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them shows how valuable the slightest difference can be made if used with economy. The upper surface of the steps is quite light in the moon, and yet their near edge is determined with vivid emphasis by the very slight additional space of light upon it dividing the



No. 62. Menzel. Frederick the Great.

upper surface with its tone of parallel lines from the darker cross hatched surface below. The varying direction of this cross hatching upon the stone is used not only to express gloom, but these lines being kept fairly open and vigorous, display and do not conceal their relative direction, and so suggest the surface of the stone itself. The shadow of the porch falls upon the standing figure as a band of solid black ; but the gloom behind him is a relieved gloom, not a solid, but an intangible space into which could be reached an unobstructed hand. In the rich shadow behind the

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kneeling figure the lines are practically at right angles, very close together, and fairly thick, so that the squares of white are very small. The differentiation between the solid stonework in semi-darkness and the gloom of the shadows is so simply managed that its subtlety might be overlooked, and will, perhaps, only be fully appreciated by a line draughtsman. It is difficult in



No. 63. Menzel. Frederick the Great.

Boyd Houghton's work to trace any influence of any kind, except that of the impact of life, which, as an artist, he passed on through the medium of whatever job came his way as an illustrator. The world to him seems to have been a round world with fat and jolly men in it, and women who, for all their grace, were solid and real, not anæmic outlines of angels. When they walked they trod upon the ground, like Shakespeare's mistress. He was untroubled (or showed no trouble) by any hampering theory of style such as in one direction enlarged, and in another cramped, the work of Sandys ; and was ready at all times to vary

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his methods according to the matter in hand, and to restrain himself or let himself go according to his humour. Yet a Houghton is always immediately recognizable through all his variations by a large handsomeness of design ; a voluptuousness of sweeping curve—



No. 64. Menzel (p. 440). Frederick the Great.

a love of the unexpected and odd in line, character and place—running often enough to the fantastic and contorted even in real life, as in the American series, and such drawings as he made direct from his own unfiltered London experience. The emphasis he brings to bear is not primarily upon the changing aspect of things, as was Charles Keene's, but upon salient points of significance and solid form in a condition of significant

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action which made a natural rhythm. Things were things—they were outside him at this or that distance in relation to one another in light and shade—and his vision is convincingly true in spite of the individual manner in which he presents it.

He appears to have loved children, and he illustrated a whole book full of them on which, while not his greatest artistic performance, he lavished more care than upon any other. He does not sentimentalize or idealize them : he loved their fat little legs, and observed their ways as they were, with an almost maternal tenderness and amusement. They have not the appearance of having been made up from "chic." The drawings are less direct, more elaborate and "finished" in technique, and fuller in tone than is usual with him, so that the subject is sometimes overlaid by general statement, but it is there underneath.

He was a great artist out of simplicity of heart, being by all accounts a great boy, who had his own tumbles and scrapes arising from a boisterous love of life and living. Perhaps his love of life predominating over his love of Art made his art finer than if the proportions had been reversed.

CHAPTER XIX

BLAKE

IT has been said of Blake that he attempted the impossible and nearly succeeded. It is when he comes nearest to attempting the realization of living character that he breaks down most severely. His written defence of his plate for Chaucer's "Canterbury Pilgrims" is a document of far greater interest and value as a clue to the mind of Blake than is the plate itself, the presentation of living types of character not in fact being within his scope, though he had all a literary man's reasoned sense of it. Here are not the "physiognomies or lineaments of universal human life beyond which Nature never stept," nor are "the horses varied according to their Riders," and the porch of the Tabard Inn is of curiously feeble design, considering that Blake had spent some years making drawings of the monuments and buildings of Westminster Abbey and various old churches in and near London for Basire, when he was an apprentice, "a circumstance he always mentioned with gratitude to Basire." He had not only no interest in the solid external things among which he lived and moved, but he repudiated such interest, and it would be hard to find an object in the whole bulk of his work represented as it appeared to him. With the exception of the series of wood cuts to Virgil in 1820 towards the end of his life, the nearest approach to such representation is probably the "Stonehenge" in the "Jerusalem,"

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but here the forms are so simple that it hardly counts. In one of the "Songs of Experience" (No. 11 in Gilchrist) there is something approaching a suggestion of the rough bark of a tree, and a delightfully comic



No. 65. Menzel. Frederick the Great.
Menzel had no mercy on his engravers.

lion at its foot. More in fact than Fuseli did Nature (external Nature, that is) "put him out." He saw the Dryad and not the oak. The spirit within and not the husk which hid it was what he really saw if he looked

BLAKE

outwards at all, as he seldom did. He loved form, not for its own sake, but for its significance—for the idea it embodied. Colour, too, with him was in a like sense illustrative. "That is not either colouring, graving or verse, which is inappropriate to the subject. He who makes a design must know the effect and colouring proper to put to that design, and will never take that of Rubens, Rembrandt or Titian to turn that which is soul and life into a mill or machine" (Gilchrist, 169, 2). "Men think that they can copy nature as correctly as I copy imagination. This they will find impossible, and all the copies or pretended copies of nature from Rembrandt to Reynolds prove that nature becomes to its victim nothing but blots and blurs. Why are copies of nature incorrect, while copies of imagination are correct? This is manifest to all. The English artist may be as assured that he is doing an injury and injustice to his country while he studies and imitates the effects of nature. England will never rival Italy while we servilely copy what the wise Italians, Raphael and Michael Angelo, scorned, nay, abhorred, as Vasari tells us. What kind of intellect must he have who sees only the colours of things, and not the forms of things? No man of sense can think that an imitation of the objects of nature is the art of painting, or that such imitation (which anyone may easily perform) is worthy of notice, much less that such an art should be the glory and pride of a nation. A jockey that is anything of a jockey will never buy a horse by the colour; and a man who has got any brains will never buy a picture by the colour" (Gilchrist II, 172-3).

CHAPTER XX

MILLAIS AND THE ILLUSTRATION OF VERSE

IF the drawing is as fine as can be in its appeal to the æsthetic faculties, it stands to reason that the pleasure taken in it will be still greater if it intrigues other faculties of the mind in addition, but its primary appeal must always be to the æsthetic sense. This, however, being satisfied, the more fully charged the drawing with interest the better. Much that is written in the criticisms of poetry is equally applicable to the study of art in line. Certain verse forms lend themselves to a condensation of thought and a closeness of packing that might be compared to a telegraphic style of writing, where every superfluous word is omitted and each one that is put in is weighed as though it had a money value ; yet there are others where the gallop of the rhythm might be checked if the line were overcharged with meaning. The condensation of thought in a Shakespearean sonnet would ill accord with Swinburne's anapæstic style. Equally the close packing of Dürer's angular and charactered method would ill accord with the melodic rhythm of Beardsley. One is a weight carrier, the other for speed, and the choice of a style should be made in accordance with the object in view.

While an illustrator may be moved by a fine line of verse, not only an image, he has no means of matching it by the content of his drawing, but only by some

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intensity of vision and quality of expression in line
that if it could be defined instead of only described
would make pictorial art a superfluity :

“ Here, oh, here will I set up my everlasting rest,
And shake the yoke of unauspicious stars
From this world wearied flesh—eyes, look your last,
Arms take your last embrace—”

Here he fails—he has cold and pathetic beauty, and
living beauty in dramatic and passionate relation, but
all the rest—“ Out of me—out of me ! ” is all that he
can say. It is not that the artist is less moved by these
most moving of all words, but that—being so moved
he realizes that the movement and the pathos belong
to words read or spoken and not to lines, masses or
surfaces drawn or painted. It is necessary to make a
sharp contrast between the functions of literature and
pictorial art. What picture can match :

“ O Absolom, my son, my son ! ”

It requires for its literary effect the progress of a
lengthy precedent narrative, and the dry habit of state-
ment into which, when the ear is accustomed to the
bald statement of facts, there falls this sudden ejacu-
lation of inarticulate grief—too full for words to bear
—and we get nothing but a sob. Music, perhaps, but
not the art of the illustrator may match it. Dramatic
gesture is untrue—a broken heart is not expressed by
gesticulating hands, extended fingers and protruding
eyes. The illustrator will be well advised to seek his
subjects elsewhere, unless he is anxious to show up
the limitation of his craft.

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The mind may be struck, in reading poetry, by a vivid image or a cadence in certain words so forcibly as to be moved to attempt a material illustration of the words or image in the hope that thereby the magic of the poem may be communicated to the drawing. Take the first verse of Omar Khayyam :

“ Awake ! for Morning in the Bowl of Night
Has flung the Stone that puts the Stars to Flight :
And Lo ! the Hunter of the East has caught
The Sultan’s Turret in a Noose of Light.”

It would be difficult to imagine a verse more tempting, as it supplies two obvious images to choose from, the flinging of the stone and the hunter’s noose ; and yet, while vivid and lucid in their effect upon the mind in the reading, the symbols would be most likely to appear in a drawing either confusing or prosaic, and so miss the point and fail of all the magic.

To take another instance :

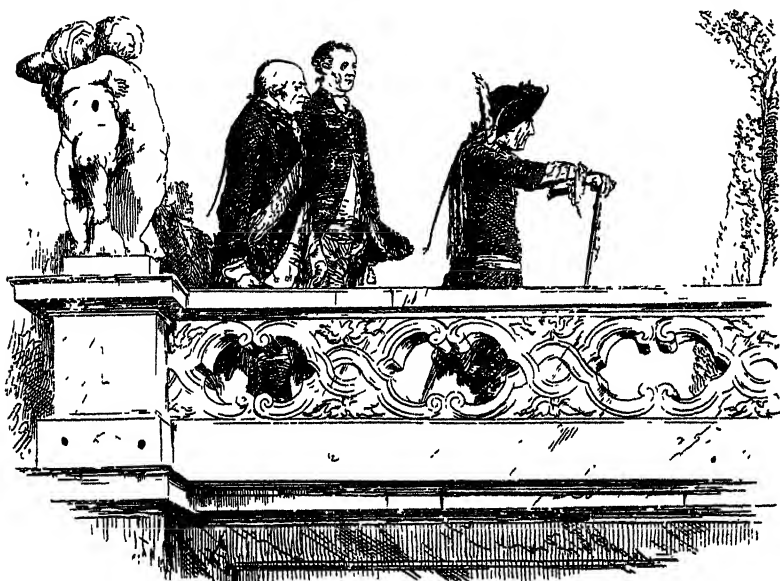
“ The Worldly Hope men set their Hearts upon
Turns Ashes—or it prospers ; and anon
Like Snow upon the Desert’s dusty Face
Lighting a little Hour or two—is gone.”

What could be clearer or more concrete ? There is a symbol ready made for Hope—Suppose then we start off with an Anchor. What next ? The Anchor has to turn into Ashes or to prosper : and anon ?—no, an Anchor cannot fall like snow : the anchor must be given up.

Hope—Worldly Hope—Faith, Hope, Charity : how do we represent these ? As fairy ladies in Greek gowns ?

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Again the trouble about the Ashes. The mind turns towards cremation at once—and the scattering of the ashes on the Desert—the possible Prosperity of the lady is left out of account. Let us try again : further along “set their Hearts”—Darts, naturally—“Snow



No. 66. Menzel. Frederick the Great.

It is difficult to get modern process engravers to match these slaves of the burin in a Menzel.

upon the Dusty Face”—suggests a frosted picture like a Christmas card—a picture that leaves out the movement, the change, that it is the object of the verse to bring home, and does nothing but tack a fringe upon the subject. “Men set their Hearts upon—”. What? Something that shall hold in it the seeds of prosperity and of ruin—Chance ; Change ; The Wheel of Fortune—the turn of a card—the fall of the dice. And so

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we sift out and choose some symbol, probably not actually mentioned, through which the whole and not the partial meaning of the verse may be graphically brought out.

It is generally in the illustration of poetical work that such difficulties are to be encountered ; where the facts used stand not only as facts, but where everything is made to bear some burden of meaning outside itself. This should never be used as an excuse for slovenliness of technique or composition, on the plea that it is the idea to be conveyed and not the manner of its conveyance that is the important matter. The finer the idea the more dignified should be the rendering of it ; and the setting out of abstractions in concrete form often calls for a more intense realism and pressure of interest in the facts presented, than is necessary for the illustration of the ordinary " matter of fact " prose. It may almost be laid down as a rule that the illustration of poetry will call for a greater degree of particularization than will prose. A general statement may be made in prose ; but in poetry all must be as vivid and sharp as though seen by lightning—without hesitation and alternatives—not vaguely suggestive, except perhaps in cumulative effect, and this holds equally of the illustration of it. There must be no timidity in the grasp of the facts of the imagination, but dragons, Titans, fairies, gods and devils, must be drawn with even more precision and conviction than the portrait of " the man in the street "—or failure is inevitable. The more far-fetched the image the more precise it should be in the presentation.

Witness the Apocalypse, where, while the Revelation

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is debatable, every image is as clear as daylight, no matter how vague its significance ; and let us see how Albrecht Dürer dealt with it. Here is no fumbling, slipping and feeling about blindfold or in a mist, but a tread sure as upon a rock. The line is laid down with



No. 67. Menzel. Frederick the Great.

a firmness that to some is almost repellent. The statement is as bald and dry as a statement of account.

Lucidity a mark of imagination

The lack of clarity which is thought by some to be a mark of the imagination is the mark not of imagination but of wool-gathering—to envelop a symbol in a fog is like stirring up a shallow puddle in order to conceal its shallowness. A cartoon in tone is an abomination.

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The treatment of an idea is as important as the idea itself. There may be two opinions upon any subject, and either opinion may be nobly or meanly held: a man may be accidentally and meanly right, where



No. 68. Menzel. From a proof in the Print Room, British Museum.
A wonderful facsimile wood engraving.

another is quite nobly wrong—the manner of statement of what is held as Truth is the measure by which the artist is judged. The vision may be partial and the technique may be faulty, but conviction, even a narrow one, may atone. Quiet statement may be even more of a passport to acceptance than vehemence. So that it is

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well that Michael Angelo was restrained by the intractability of marble, and that Blake had his apprenticeship as an engraver of works of despicable inferiority to his own, otherwise these overflowing and impatient minds, unschooled by the stern discipline of craftsmanship, might have been poured out in too chaotic a splutter for comprehension instead of in a clear stream. A great deal of Blake's work was poured out in this way with the result that to this day many people believe that he was a madman. Without these objective difficulties to give pause to the rapid utterance the result might have been not only a partial but an entire torrential jumble in which fact and fancy, idea and symbol tangled together in inextricable confusion. Ideation was in excess, but in order to get itself expressed, happily for us, this appears to have lent an executive fury to both artists. Albrecht Dürer was more happily constituted, being weighed down with a leadweight of Teutonic ballast, like a yacht which could not carry so much sail without a heavy counterpoise. His ideas are never in excess of his craftsmanship, but are part of it, while Blake, who was persistent, but not patient, ran and stumbled where Dürer walked warily and secure.

Interest in series of drawings

Everyone must have thought at times what a pity it is that two personalities could not be rolled into one—in fact, that qualities had not their defects. But such minds as Blake, not primarily craftsmen, but poets expressing themselves in form, must be judged not by a single masterpiece, as many artists can be, but by their work as a whole, which is a cumulative expression

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of their thought, with a beat and rhythm throbbing through the whole of it as through a poem or melody. This is best seen in the case of a series of drawings like the illustrations to Job, where there is a quite legitimate reference of one design to another; there is progression as in a work of literature, where the end is the corollary of the beginning. The first drawing shows Job sitting with his wife, his sons and daughters, kneeling under a tree in whose branches hang all sorts of musical instruments. The sun rises on the left, and the moon is in the last quarter upon the right. In the last picture the sun and moon are reversed; and Job and all his family are again gathered together beneath the tree, but they are standing—the instruments are taken down and all are being played in an orchestra of happy praise. The effect of repetition with variation, playing as it does on the memory by its allusion to the opening, adds an extrinsic charm to the drawing, which is then to be judged as following on something already seen, not as a unit but like a chapter in a book. A purist may say that such cumulative effect is improper to pictorial art, and yet all art that contains rhythm contains reference backwards or forwards, even though its development be interrupted from time to time; in this case as though the rhythm were extended beyond the frame of one picture into the next, making one scheme. In book illustration the interest of one drawing is frequently greatly enhanced by its reference to another of the series, though the actual quality of the craftsmanship is unaltered thereby and each drawing must stand upon its own merits as a drawing. Indifference to this extrinsic interest in the artist is a frequent

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source of irritation to the spectator, who naturally expects to see the same character consistently displayed throughout a story, so that if Don Quixote at the end



No. 69. Millais. From the Moxon "Tennyson," 1857.
Facsimile wood engraving.

of the book has a shorter nose than he has in the frontispiece, although each drawing may be of equal merit and interest, the reader imputes blame to the illustrator for disturbing that unity of impression it is his business to make. This may happen easily enough, but the illustrator should make it his business to establish

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his types firmly to begin with, so that he may stick consistently to them throughout the series and make the drawings proceed step by step with the text. It is good to have well marked differences of character, as of height, stout or lean, style of dress, dark or fair, young and old, clean shaven and bearded, where such are appropriate, as the drawing will have more variety of interest, and "read" more readily, and give effect to those more subtle differentiations of character which otherwise might not have their full value.

Although any work that contains a concrete idea or fact is capable of illustration, there are pitfalls for the unwary who should undertake certain tasks without due forethought. Particularly is this the case with the illustration of poetry, where not only the facts are to be represented, but, if possible, the poet's exaltation. Take Tennyson's "Maud," where the characteristic magic of the poem would be in danger of evaporation as soon as the *dramatis personæ* were bodied forth to the eye in the costume of the period; and the drawings might more easily than not convey nothing more than the illustrations of a melodramatic novel, since "Maud" is nothing more nor less than a novel, where the narrative is indicated in a series of lyrical outbursts. The novel might be emphasized and the lyricism expelled, the husk alone remaining. "In Memoriam" presents even greater difficulties. Passion would have to be implicit in the technique of the illustrator—Millais as a young Pre-Raphaelite might have achieved the task, though it is easy to see how he was worried by some of the verses he undertook in the Moxon Tennyson, where he found it difficult to reconcile

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 modernity of character and costume with his conception of dignity of presentation. Where there is discrepancy between the style and the thing to be expressed, a few of the drawings fall little, if at all, short of the comic. Romantic exaltation is easy for a



No 70. Millais From the Moxon "Tennyson," 1857.

knight in armour, but to express it clad in a frock coat and trousers is another matter. Millais, though young, was by no means immature when judged by his extraordinary achievement in other cases in this volume, where he found subjects more congenial to his stricter style of treatment; and he succeeded exquisitely when he abandoned this stringency for a more tender and less ambitious manner in his drawing to "Edward

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Grey"; a simple tale where such treatment was warranted by the verse. This drawing does not nullify but bears out what has been said in relation to "Maud" and "In Memoriam," for the drawing might well stand among Millais' later and better known illustrations to the novels of Anthony Trollope, many or most of which, in spite of their popularity, this drawing surpasses in artistic and delicately dramatic quality, even after a certain thinness of effect is allowed for.

Later, in full maturity, when he came to the illustration of the Parables, we find how triumphantly his passion carried him to the creation of a number of masterpieces; but how, this failing him, and in spite of obvious effort and laboriousness, his heart being no longer in it, the interpretation becomes perfunctory. It may be that only youth can maintain the stress of such intensity except at ever increasing intervals; and that, with its passage, less exacting forms of expression are instinctively felt out for. As he grew older his work declined in artistic intensity, though as it lost its poetry and became more prosaic it increased in popularity. Perhaps on account of the greater familiarity of the subjects taken and the effort needed to carry them through "well enough" for their ephemeral purpose being less exacting, he succeeded well, where he failed in his more ambitious work of the same period. But these successes were on a lower plane of aim and achievement; the composition is never so close knit; physical energy of production takes the place of mental, even though this had been hesitant, and so these products are less interesting to the student than early comparative failures.

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In looking at the early drawings by all the Pre-Raphaelites in the Moxon Tennyson, it is difficult, for a modern student, accustomed to process reproduction, to realize in face of their minuteness that he is looking at a print from the actual surface drawn upon by the hand of the artist, and that consequently no reduction has taken place.

The "Edward Grey" drawing measures no more than $3\frac{1}{4}$ wide by $3\frac{1}{2}$ high, yet in the "Collected Illustrations" of Millais it is not overpowered by the blank margin of a page of $9\frac{3}{4}$ by $12\frac{3}{8}$. More wonderful is it that so elaborate a composition as "The Revival" and "The Sleeping Palace" should measure but $3\frac{3}{4}$ wide and $3\frac{1}{4}$ high, with all their amount of precise and detailed drawing. No painted composition by Millais had more care put into it than these tiny drawings, which yet maintain an unentangled simplicity of effect—"reading" without difficulty or magnifying glass to the most elderly eye. Rossetti is sometimes involved and "precious" in comparison, but in his case the block is handled as though it were the gold on which the early engravers learned their trade rather than a few square inches of wood.

CHAPTER XXI

DORÉ AND SCALE

AN important matter to consider in a composition is the relative scale of the figures to their surroundings, so that there is no conflict of interest between them. If it is desired to represent facial character and expression it will be necessary to take a fairly close view of the figures, which will then naturally be made to dominate their surroundings ; but if they are so placed that the emphasis of the composition falls so evenly that a doubt might be felt as to where lay the primary interest of the designer, it will be well to suppress them still further, that they may appear subordinate at least to their surroundings, and depending for their dramatic effect largely upon silhouette. Interest should never be half-heartedly distributed. Doré's illustrations to Balzac's "Contes Drolatiques" are remarkable in this particular. He appears to have had a natural eye for scale, and bases many of his happiest effects upon it. On a full-page block of $3\frac{3}{8}$ base and $5\frac{1}{2}$ high, he can so manage scale as to give a sense of perfectly stupendous height and massiveness to buildings, mountains, etc. He piles Pelion on Ossa with the utmost ease (see for example p. 119, p. 123, and elsewhere).

In the "Table des Dessins" there is a wonderful series of thirty little drawings to the titles of the different stories. It is almost miraculous the amount of dramatic

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effect he has obtained, for he will give a dancing crowd in fantastic silhouette, a procession of beggars in a spacious landscape, an ambushade of cross-bowmen with their victim, and over a score of other fancies



No. 71. Millais. From the Moxon "Tennyson," 1857.

appealing directly to the eye without the eye having to seek them out in a space frequently no more than $3\frac{1}{4}$ by 1, and sometimes less.

One drawing is amusing as it contains a curious little problem in addition to the subject of it. It is $3\frac{1}{4}$ wide, by $\frac{3}{4}$ high; but it represents three sides of the quadrangle of a monastery, with a tearing carmagnole of monks on the centre. There are innumerable windows drawn in; but whether he got tired of

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putting them in himself and desired to leave it to the engraver to carry on after he had indicated about three-quarters of them and just wrote "etc." to direct him ; whether the engraver was too stupid to take the hint or was witty enough to think he would "show up" the artist's indolence, is uncertain ; but he has been at pains to engrave the "etc." instead of filling in the windows, which would have been the easier task. This "etc." is in reverse, which rather points to its having been bona-fide an instruction to the engraver, and that the engraver took it simply as in the day's work.

An example of an early "process" used by Doré

Though nearly all the drawings in this volume are engraved on wood, and very sympathetically interpreted, considerable artistic ability beyond mere accuracy being frequently called for, there are one or two examples where an apparently autographic process has been used by Doré.

At page 91 will be found "L'Advocat Feron," which is probably printed from a stereotype or electrotype from a drawing scratched through a ground of sufficient body upon a metal plate to yield relief to the cast taken from it. It is signed G. Doré, in both of the bottom corners, as though the artist had worked twice upon the plate, and one signature may have been obscured ; and in the middle, between the two signatures, is "Procédé Piaud." From the fineness of a great number of the lines there is little doubt that it is printed from a metal block. It shares many of the characteristics of a pen drawing and of an etching combined,

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which would arise from the use of an etching needle, varied with a chisel-edged instrument ; the spaces of solid black having the appearance of being scraped with a penknife. There are traces of the block printing up here and there between the lines, this pointing to its



No. 72. Millais. "Edward Grey."
From the Moxon "Tennyson," 1857.

being shallow in the intricate parts. There is no indication of this in the more open spaces ; but it would be easy for a wood-engraver to run over the block and deepen these places where printing up was most likely to happen. If this conjecture as to the method used is correct, the process was one similar to one tested by the writer about 1890, which was intended for rapid

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reproduction by means of stereotyping alone without the aid of photography. The plate was coated heavily with a white, chalky preparation of considerable thickness, through which the artist scratched, blowing away the ploughed out chalk, which interfered with his view of the work done. The difficulties presented to the artist by this method lost what time was saved in reproduction, so that the advantages were outweighed by the disadvantages, and it was not used. The history of the Piaud process may have been similar. Doré was an impatient technician, and in spite of the interest of this particular result, he probably found the method irksome, preferring that trouble should be taken by the wood-engraver, so long as he himself was spared.

In the later process it was not only a question of eliminating the costly labour of the wood-engraver and giving a more autographic result, but of hampering the artist in his means of expression, to save the time of the photographer, which was worth less ; and as the work had to be done the exact size of the proposed print, elaborate detail, easy enough on a larger scale than the reproduction, was rendered difficult or impossible where no reduction could take place.

A method of enlarging and reducing, and "The India-rubber Artist"

So late as 1860 some excitement seems to have been caused by a mechanical means of enlarging and reducing drawings by producing them in lithographic ink on a sheet of vulcanized rubber, which was then either stretched or relaxed to the required scale. It was thought that this would be of great use, not only

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No. 73. Millais. From "Poets of the Nineteenth Century."

for artistic purposes, but for the production of ordnance maps, Bibles, and so on, once drawn or set up. Surprisingly accurate results were obtained by the "Electro-Printing-Block Company," presumably

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formed to work the patent, which, of course, must shortly have been displaced by photographic methods. In *Once a Week* for August 25th, 1860, in an article headed "The India-Rubber Artist," we read : " We may have the earliest folio copies of Shakespeare's plays reproduced with exactness in more available sizes through the medium of a few sheets of India-rubber. It seems only the other day since this extraordinary substance performed the solitary duty of rubbing out pencil marks ; now it bids fair to revolutionize one branch of the Fine Arts, and to add very largely to the sum of enjoyment among the refined and educated classes of society. When the first savage tapped the india-rubber tree how little did he dream," etc.

The enthusiast for this process did not foresee the overwhelming arrival of photographic methods that have swept this one away. But he had a prophetic sense of the uses of rubber, which is having far-reaching effects on printing at the present time, in the offset Press, quite apart from its other commercial uses.

Large drawing not necessary to express great size

An important, but frequently overlooked, fact in scale is that a sense of grandeur or of towering height of a building, a mountain, or a Titan, will not be achieved either by using a large sheet of paper, nor by an accumulation of gigantic parts to build up the enormous whole. The sense of impressive size is as readily produced on a half sheet of notepaper as on a ten or twenty foot canvas, since in both cases it is arrived at by proportion. A baby drawn on the half-sheet will look no less essentially a baby if enlarged to

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No. 74. Millais. The Parable of the Unjust Judge.

twenty feet high ; nor will a mountain painted upon the backcloth of a theatre look smaller, as a mountain, though reduced to the size of a postage stamp. The

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backcloth may be painted to represent nothing larger than a cottage interior, yet through the window may be seen the Alps. How is this ?

Let us suppose that we have to represent a giant in a space 2 in. high by 2 in. base. He is described as of enormous height, with a tremendous head ; his great muscles bulging, his great footprints annihilating cities, his hands swinging an uprooted tree for a club, till we are appalled at the accumulation.

If all these details are drawn as large as possible, with every toe as big as a street, what shall we get as a result ?

A dwarf—a clumsily built baby, “ The smallest Giant on record.” We shall have equal length and breadth, and so miss the impression of height.

Great size is conveyed rather by the minimizing of detail, the keeping of it small, in order to subtract as little as possible from the mass.

CHAPTER XXII

REDUCTION OF DRAWINGS BY PROCESS

WITH the introduction of process it was found, provided moderate care was taken in the etching, that it was possible to obtain the finest lines the sharpest pen was capable of making, and to print them too. Success depended more upon the rapidity of the press and the quality of the paper used than upon any extravagant demand on the skill of the block-maker. At the same time, the more incompetent the block-maker the more inclined he was to take himself seriously, to make difficulties, and to endeavour to dictate to the artist as to what would "come" and what "wouldn't." The American "process people," with their greater receptivity of modern inventiveness pushed, not against the artist in order to make things easy for themselves, but laid themselves out to see how far it was possible to go with him in the direction of reproducing the most delicate task he could lay upon them. It was, and probably still is, the practice of American artists to make even their pen drawings for reproduction very large. It is debatable whether there is any advantage to be gained by this, but it is well that every experiment should be tried. What they had in mind was doubtless the idea of exploiting reduction as a means to obtain an appearance of great delicacy and minuteness in the drawing, the pleasure in which is lost so soon as it is known that the skill displayed is mechanical, and has

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nothing to do with the artist. There is a curious pleasure not of a very high order to be found in minuteness for its own sake where it is an exhibition of skill in craftsmanship, such as the engraving of the Lord's Prayer on a threepenny bit, and similar feats. But where the minuteness is mechanically arrived at, it does not give rise to the same character of enjoyment. The delight in the possibilities of the mechanical process carefully gone over by the wood engraver, which enabled Abbey to indulge as freely as he liked in the suggestion of colour and surface qualities and textures, as in the elaborate drawing of silks and brocades in his early costume drawings, which constituted so much of their charm, particularly while it was fresh, in the end threatened to run away with him. In his later work it appears as though he dare not put down a masculine line, but must build a figure, not from its bones outwards, but by the cloth in which it was clothed. The world of his art became a superfine surface, not a constructed solid.

Most pen draughtsmen are inclined to make their drawings too large ; when this is the case a certain thinness is the result ; even if much labour is spent in the enrichment of a thin drawing it is probable that this will detract from, rather than help, the underlying conception, the simple force of the thought being buried under a superfluous pile of technique ; the equivalent of a simple thought whose effect is lost in a cloud of verbiage.

Where the drawing is a simple one, and the size of the page adequate, the drawing can conveniently be made of the same size as, or not much larger, than the reproduction. It will be found easier to obtain a rich

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No. 75. Millais. The Parable of the Sower.

effect on a scale that requires precise, delicate, and fastidious workmanship rather than muscular exercise

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to be as like his work as possible, without a factitious minuteness.

Whistler, himself an American, inveighed against the huge etching, with some, but not entire justice, and as, to some extent, his remarks are applicable to pen drawing, some of them are here given :

“ Propositions ”

1. That in Art it is criminal to go beyond the means used in its exercise.
2. That the space to be covered should always be in proper relation to the means used for covering it.
3. That in etching, the means used, or instrument employed, being the finest possible point, the space to be covered should be small in proportion.
4. That all attempts to overstep the limits insisted upon by such proportion are inartistic thoroughly, and tend to reveal the paucity of the means used, instead of concealing the same, as required by Art in its refinement.
5. That the huge plate, therefore, is an offence, its undertaking an unbecoming display of determination and ignorance, its accomplishment a triumph of unthinking earnestness and uncontrollable energy, endowments of the “ duffer.”

Whistler does appear to overlook here the essential point in an “ etching,” namely, the use of acid, and it is the use of acid, and not the use of the point, which decides the thickness of a line. The etching needle cannot be dissociated from the use of acid. Yet there are undoubtedly artistic limits to the size of an etching besides those imposed by the size of an etching press.



No. 76. Millais. Illustration to Anthony Trollope.

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We realize them, but need not further analyse them, but see to what extent Whistler's main contention is applicable to pen drawing.

Propositions 1 and 2 can be accepted without cavil, and, while in general practice it will be found that as Whistler's further propositions, while not absolutely conclusive, do generally hold good so far as the large etching plate is concerned, they also serve with reservations as against the huge pen drawing.

The limiting factors in the matter of size may need re-stating for etching, but that is for an etcher to do. As a pen draughtsman, I may perhaps venture upon a few tentative conclusions, or at least put forward a few considerations towards such.

There is hardly a limit of size up to which a pen drawing cannot effectively be enlarged, if it is a finely proportioned drawing to begin with, as may be seen whenever pen drawings are exhibited upon the screen by means of lantern slides. Even the tiniest masterpiece becomes surprising, not, as might be expected, by its coarseness or enlargement, but by its delicacy ; without loss of strength it gains greatly in impressiveness. Yet in spite of this, pen drawing is naturally limited, not only by the thickness or fineness of the pen (which is a variable matter from the reed to Brandauer's 518), as an etching is rather by the width of a line that will conveniently hold ink when the printer's rag is passed over it, than by the fineness of the needle, as well as by this consideration for pen drawing that the length of the natural stroke of the pen-point as the hand rests upon the board should dictate the scale of the drawing. I find that without moving my wrist from



No. 77. Millais. Illustration to "Orley Farm."

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No. 78. Leighton (Frederick). Cain. Facsimile wood engraving.
Almost inspired.

the drawing board, and holding the pen in a normal manner as in writing, and maintaining full control of the pen with finger and thumb, I can describe a parabolic curve having a segment of about nine and a half inches more or less. This may be taken as deciding the scale inside which the hand and wrist will best control the pen. It should be an exceptional case that

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would require a single curve or stroke in excess of this limit, as this will call for the joining on of one or more strokes to complete the line, or the employment, not of the wrist and fingers, but that the stroke should be made from the elbow, or even the shoulder, when delicacy of control by the finger and thumb would be lost. It should not be forgotten that the characteristic of a pen is its precision ; and that if control by the finger and thumb is lost, this characteristic goes with it. Besides this consideration lies that of the thickness of the pen employed, and the amount of ink it will naturally carry without being a source of annoyance, (1) because the ink is exhausted before the stroke is complete, (2) from the constant danger of blots from an over-charged pen.

The thickness of the main lines of a composition when first put down should be such that they are plainly and clearly seen at the distance from the eye at which it is intended by the artist that his drawing shall be viewed as a whole, otherwise they will either be weak in effect or require strengthening. The finest lines need be no finer than that when the composition is viewed as a whole, they shall be fine enough to appear to lose their identity, and become parts of a group of lines, and not challenge the predominance of the lines of construction. The fineness or thickness of lines have no intrinsic artistic value, but only in relation to each other and the scale of the composition.

Any elaboration that detracts from the dignity and unity of effect of a composition should be avoided, and, where one line will do instead of two, it will be more than twice as valuable artistically.

CHAPTER XXIII

SOME LIMITATIONS AND POSSIBILITIES IN BLACK AND WHITE CONVENTION

THERE is always interest and excitement to be got from exploring the limits imposed by the use of any given medium, and nothing is more instructive than experiments conducted with this view, or even, and probably this is more general, without any idea that a judicious use of the medium does impose limitations. Full tone effects, with faces elaborately drawn and strictly modelled in shadow or half tone against the light, will strain the medium of pen drawing further than it is in general wise to carry it, and disappointment is almost inevitable. A suggestive method rather than a strict one is more likely to be successful ; but it is wise to realize that minor differences of tone or local colour should be disregarded if tone is attempted, and only the main oppositions of light and dark established, with no more minor tones than are necessary to keep things in place or to sweeten the passage of shade on a rounded form. To put it graphically, the world to a pen draughtsman might consist of black and white men and women, it being not properly his concern to discriminate the subtle complexion of objects, his business being primarily with form. He may introduce light and shade, but he will be wise to confine his attempts to such light and shade as reveal and emphasize rather than conceal or veil the essential

SOME LIMITATIONS IN BLACK AND WHITE form. The mysteries of night and twilight are better left to other media than to the unaided pen, not because these are absolutely beyond the limits of penmanship to suggest, but because the expression of such mysteriousness is by way of being a *tour de force*, and is not in the natural genius of the medium. That such a method is laborious does not, or would not, matter if the results were not frequently tedious and dull. If a subject is incapable of clear, dignified statement, or of direct and witty summary, which are the natural aims of pen drawing—if surface rather than form, space rather than limit, atmosphere or obscurity rather than definition, qualification rather than simplicity, vagueness rather than lucidity, are aimed at—then other means will more conveniently yield what is wanted.

Submission to the limitations imposed by space and medium is the mark of the artist and master of his craft, as rebellion and experiment are the marks of the healthy apprentice. The desire for fulness of representation, however, yields to the selective sense in the end, and the limitations imposed by media are more willingly observed the more experience and experiment have pointed them out. The wise critic will applaud economy of means rather than extravagance, though a certain extravagance is to be looked for and condoned when youth is feeling its way to its kingdom.

A most effective convention, more natural it might be thought to the wood-cutter even than that of leaving a line in relief, is that of drawing by masses of light, leaving out any attempt at half tone ; all lights above a certain pitch being cut out, and all shades below being left black, with the exception that line or minor

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shapes of dark are left where necessary to delimit essential forms. Such, roughly, was the method adopted by Nicholson for his "Alphabet." Somewhat reminiscent of the wood engravings or wood cuts of the old Broad sheets, Ballad headings, and the work of the



No. 79. Sandys. "The Old Chartist." Facsimile wood engraving.
Sandys is one of England's greatest artists.

elder Crawhall as it was, in the hands of so expert an artist and craftsman it proved capable of yielding extraordinarily rich effects, as the natural balance of light and dark is arrived at by the excess of each mutually cancelling out. Of course, while a jolly decorative effect is readily obtainable by this means, these are obtainable only where the subject is simple enough to

SOME LIMITATIONS IN BLACK AND WHITE lend itself to such treatment, otherwise these effects may be obtainable only at the sacrifice of subtleties of form or detail which are readily obtainable by other means. A considerable amount of black and white drawing in pen and brush has been founded upon this system, and an effective combination is possible between line and solid black, as may be seen frequently in the work of Phil May, notably in his sketch of Mickiewicz in the "Parson and the Painter."

At the present time the public is more accustomed to a variety of artistic conventions and their many combinations and modifications than was the case twenty and thirty years ago, when a more or less photographic ideal still obtained, and when wash drawing was looked upon by art editors and the public as a method superior to and "more finished" than the "pen sketch," and to that extent the young artist is better off than his immediate predecessors, who had to invent new or adapt and force through old methods that, familiar as they are now to the public, were generally at the time resented as revolutionary.

CHAPTER XXIV

SUGGESTIONS TO BE FOUND IN COPPER- PLATE ENGRAVING FOR PEN DRAWING

WHILE the mediævally inclined among book illustrators have been inspired by the work of the wood-cutter of line, since his work was designed to be printed in the same manner as letterpress, and frequently with it, there is as much or more reason why he should look, not to the wood-cutters but to the engravers on copper as exemplars of strict style, if he must look backwards for inspiration, since the burin naturally yields a line much more in correspondence with our modern steel nib than the line left by the wood-cutter's knife, and is equally reproducible. It has to be borne in mind always that the wood-cutter had to make two lines always to the draughtsman's one, and it is remarkable how well he generally managed to preserve the illusion that the draughtsman's line is the work of the wood-cutter, rather than the white space in which it exists. It is the white and not the black that is the wood-cutter's work, it being his business to see that the white should touch without impinging upon the black line drawn upon the wood by the artist. It is indeed miraculous with what fidelity his uninspiring task was carried out, since any display of personality on his own part, except in a capacity for devoted self-sacrifice, must prove a fatal impertinence. It remains none the less that the line printed from a wood block is not the

SUGGESTIONS FOR PEN DRAWING



No. 80. Sandys. King War-Wolf. A noble drawing.
While maintaining Dürer's strictness of style, Sandys contrived to
add local colour and a fuller light and shade.

wood-cutter's or wood engraver's line ; it is the white spaces that are his handiwork, while the line of an engraver upon metal is the engraver's own, and corresponds more nearly to the characteristic stroke of a pen

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than that which the wood-cutter has had ever so gingerly to approach and leave alone.

The modern pen draughtsman, therefore, in looking back, while not neglecting the great wood cuts as a basis for the formation of style in drawing, should not neglect a study of the engravings on metal of the same period. There is no reason why the virility of the one should not be combined with the delicacy of the other in due proportion, since modern methods of photographic reproduction can render either or both at once with impartial ease and fidelity, the only restraining considerations for the artist being the appropriateness of their employment, the quality of the paper, and the printing to be expected.

That any humane being can be found to regret the days of the facsimile wood engraver is a wonder, since here is a case where the hand is definitely inferior to the machine. Accuracy was the highest requirement, and it would be as inhumane to desire the mistress of the house with great pains to miscalculate the servants' wages for the month rather than to get them right by the simple means of a ready-reckoner. And yet many humane people do sigh for everything to be "hand done," instead of devoting their energies towards seeing that the machine is properly directed. The risk of the employment of a machine is that things are sometimes made so easy that a habit of entire carelessness is induced, and the machine is blamed for the defects of the man behind it.

The V shaped burin, if used with variations of force, ploughs a line more nearly resembling in its varying thickness that of the pen than does the etched line,

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and the work of a master of the burin might be studied as a corrective against any tendency towards sloppiness of style. Not being so facile of handling as the pen, economy, precision, and restraint are virtues which the burin imposes, where the pen sometimes runs away with the artist and leads to profusion, indefinition, and haphazard workmanship.

CHAPTER XXV

“ LINE ” AND LINES

THOUGH the pen has its special characteristics and advantages, these should not be strained in order to make a display of “ penmanship ” at the expense of the form expressed. Line, Line, Line, and always Line, as expression of the essential form in the simplest and most direct manner should be the aim of the stylist with the pen, as with any other point.

Theories of lines. Watts and the Intransigents

On one occasion Watts was particularly interesting on the subject of line and largeness of style. He dwelt on the fact that few things in nature are exactly globular or circular—the more exactly it tended towards the smoothly spherical the smaller an object appeared ; but that usually even those forms which most tend towards the circular were in nature made up of broken arcs of larger circles. We were walking round the garden at Little Holland House, and to emphasize his point he pulled a nasturtium leaf, which conveyed his idea to a nicety.

Extremes meet sometimes ; yet it is remarkable how closely Watts’ theory resembled that of the “ Intransigents ” as they were at that time known—the group to which Toulouse de L’Hautrec, Gauguin, and van Gogh belonged. These were destined later to be

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"Post Impressionists." When I explained Watts' theory to A. S. Hartrick, then just back from France, where he had seen much of this group, he told me that one of their tenets was—"All drawing is an Egg," the theory, as I understood it at the time, containing the idea at its root that all forms take shape, no matter how complicated, from their origin; as well as its more obvious implications.

"'Tis de outline what make turn—what make turn is de outline," was a favourite saying of Durand at the *Graphic*; and it was, I imagine, a rendering of a saying of Ingres, under whom he had, I believe, studied.

No matter how dark a tone is used, or how fine the lines composing it may be, it is essential that the direction of any group of these lines should be carefully considered, and as truly laid as if they were individual outlines. Insensitiveness in this matter may undo much otherwise fine drawing. So far from solidifying it, which is usually their intention, ill-directed lines may flatten a form as with an iron, or crumple it like tin. Qualifying lines should always be considered as a group, otherwise the individual lines may have the effect of a pattern upon the surface rather than suggesting the surface itself.

A very good example of a nice discrimination in this matter is to be seen in the Austin Dobson bookplate by E. A. Abbey, where the value of every line and of the spaces between lines has been calculated with extraordinary nicety, so that lines and spaces of almost equal value appear at will either as a group or as individual lines. This will be better understood if the lines representing the floor boards in the tiny picture

“ LINE ” AND LINES



No. 82. A. Boyd Houghton. From the "Arabian Nights."
Wood engraving. A fine example of spacing of mass and rhythm of line.

upon the wall be compared with the light half tone of the background ; and if the high lights upon the furniture are studied, it will be seen what effect is gained

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by seeing to it that, small as they are, they are kept unchallenged by equivalent lights near them. These lights might easily have been thrown away if their predominance had not been meticulously safeguarded. The luminosity of the shadow, and the suggestion of texture, are also deserving of careful study ; and altogether this little drawing is to be regarded as a miracle of dainty craftsmanship in its particular kind.

CHAPTER XXVI

METHODS OF TONE DRAWING

Wash

LOOKING through a bundle of magazines taken haphazard is likely to be a tedious business, particularly where "wash" illustrations predominate. The temptation to exact and full representation of appearances gives a photographic effect that has no interest except its content—the artist in such cases being nothing but an inferior kind of camera—or if the effort is made to give dramatic effect by forcing the light and shade, we are at once aware of the falsity as of a negative at once under and over exposed in patches. The more correct the observation the more photographic the effect, and emphasis of character, movement, or lighting immediately induces a sense of affectation or unnaturalness. For this reason personality is rather a hindrance than a help in this method of expression, and the result is that one drawing differs from another only by its defects, while the most perfect is the most perfectly dull. Nothing in all the history of art looks more dead. It is only when the artist conventionalizes his treatment that it becomes capable of emphasis without giving the sense of untruth to nature ; let us take, for instance, the work of Maurice Greiffenhagen, whose work, no matter how closely rendered the facts may be, is never photographic, the reason being that it is capable of artistic emphasis from the manner in which the form is enforced by a dogmatic use of line in addition to the wash. By this means

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the artist manages to make the most ordinary facts extraordinarily vivid, and in a manner invariably dignified by a fine decorative sense of composition and relation, that might appear forced if the method were not to some extent conventionalized. It is time for artists



No. 83. A. Boyd Houghton. The Grief of Camaralzaman, from the "Arabian Nights." Finely conceived as drama.

to see that art does not consist in the simple representation of things seen, and that what can be done by the photographer should be left to him.

In the days before the Meisenbach process, when wash drawings were engraved on wood, a certain liveliness was sometimes imparted to them by the wood engraver, if he was a skilful craftsman, because of the translation of the wash by means of lines, but even this was not satisfactory, as not giving the artist's exact

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work, and the spectator was in doubt between the draughtsman and the engraver. Young artists welcomed the half-tone process, as rendering their work more subtly and faithfully ; not foreseeing at the time how soon it would show them the limitations of the medium in which they worked. These were, of course, discovered by artists long before the public, which looked upon " wash drawing " as a " finished " product, and a drawing in line of any kind, but particularly the pen, as " scratchy " or " a sketch," so that art editors clamoured for " wash " drawing *ad nauseam*. Then, of course, came the photographically illustrated press and the cinematograph, both admirable things, and the artist is free, if he will, to devote himself to art, and leave the camera to do the work of record making.

Other methods

There are other methods of drawing for reproduction for printing with type ; as for instance, by the use of " scrape-out " process papers, when one, two, or three tones are ready printed upon prepared clay surfaces ; so that by scraping away the top layer another tone is disclosed ; and finally white alone. Among the few artists who have satisfactorily worked in this medium should be mentioned Louis Legrand (in the *Courrier Francais* about 1890), who managed to maintain his artistic dignity in the use of this horrible stuff. It was made most use of, I believe, in Germany, and in the hands of Thöny this method was made to yield quite extraordinary results, particularly in conjunction with one or two simple and conventionally applied colours. In the " Parson and the Painter " Phil May did a few

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drawings in this method, but, happily, not many. A drawing may be good in spite of the method, and not because of it. The method has this to commend it over wash drawing, that it conduces to a selective treatment. Various flat mechanical tones of lines or dots can be applied by the process man upon the plate itself from transfer paper if the artist thinks it desirable, and he indicates where it is to be applied by a blue tint, which does not photograph, but serves as a guide to the craftsman, who paints out with Chinese white or gum those parts on the block where there is to be no tint, and then applies the transfer before the plate is etched. Where these tints are well chosen they can be serviceable ; but in England, the process-man, left to his own way, will most probably choose a tint of the vilest and most mechanical order, totally inappropriate to the drawing. Any such methods are best left alone except in case of absolute necessity, and cases of absolute necessity are very rare.

Any medium that compels selection rather than offers facility of inclusiveness is likely to squeeze the best out of any artist. The severer the limitations and the more fully they are accepted the better will be the result ; so that mechanical as these “scrape out” methods and dotted tints appear, a more vivid effect is frequently obtained from them in artistic hands than from the use of unrestricted wash.

Surface “finish”

The reason that our public monuments are in general so bad is that surface and not shape has been followed in an attempt to give “finish” to a work that has never

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truly been begun. Petty realisms of costume take the place of splendour of outline : the exact reproduction of sword, sword-knot and spur have degraded much of our official sculpture to the level of a tailor's dummy. The artist is not proud enough, and accepts dictation



No. 84. A. Boyd Houghton. From the "Arabian Nights."
Shows as much wit in the leaving of white as in the putting in of black.

upon the very points upon which he should dictate, and never submit. Surface is common to all things—what differentiates them and gives them significance is form.

Our schools of art have been much to blame in this matter. The Academy used to insist upon students who applied for admission to its schools passing a test at the most impressionable period of their lives, not in the exercise of direct force in the grasp of form or

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imagination, but in the patient niggling and stippling of surface inessentials carefully copied from the antique long before they could appreciate it. The medium of expression most favoured by South Kensington was the "stump," for smearing on the powdered chalk,



No. 85 A. Boyd Houghton. "The Dust Barrel Nuisance," from "Graphic America."
Characteristically fantastic in observation of fact.

only suitable for the representation of surfaces, and not for drawing a line, the presence of which was generally looked upon in these exercises as a defect. It is not the general but the particular statement that is of value, and what particularizes is not the surface but the form, and what expresses the form is Line.

At the other extreme from the perpetual vignetted wash drawings in the magazines in illustration of the little tales of love or adventure, which are produced to meet the demand of an uneducated public,

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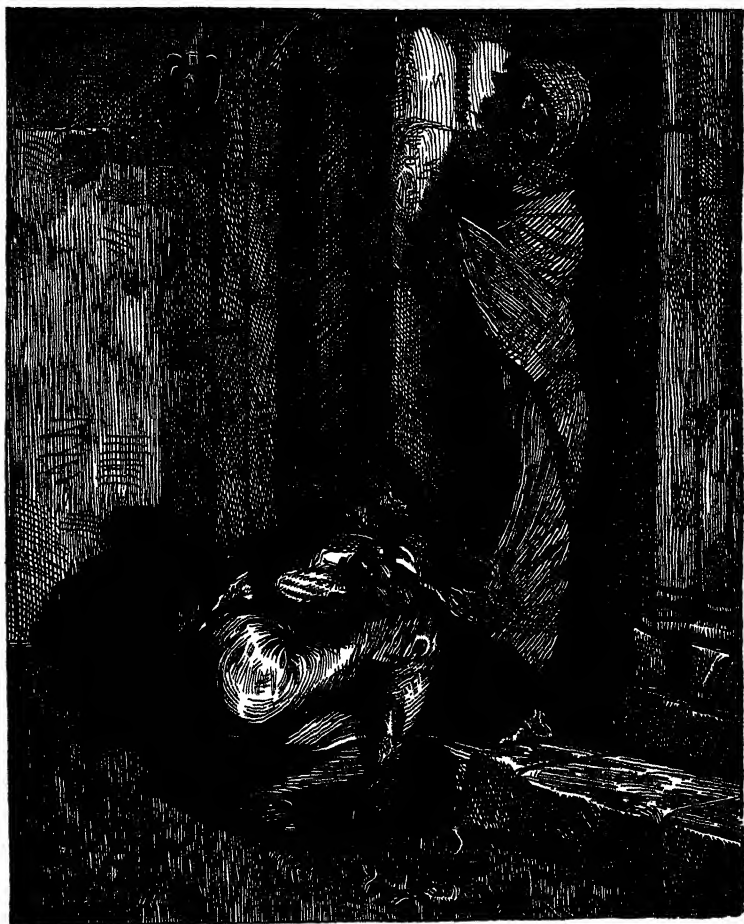
may be set the highly solemn and dull productions of a "chaste" decorative school, working in an archaic manner with an affectation of naïveté, but from which all the masculine vigour of the originals followed has been cut away. Not only do they work to the limitations imposed upon the artist by the wood-cutter, but more so when there is no need—suppleness and variety of line are thrown overboard; and they draw, not as with a pen, but as though with a wood-chopper, going all the way to imitate the work, not of the artist who drew upon the wood, but straining the modern medium to imitate the wood-cutter's failure to render the artist's work. After all this the work is reproduced by photography and printed by steam. I am reminded of a modern piece of "half-timbering" which I saw executed in the country. The "half-timbering" was carried out by nailing up thin boards on the outer surface of the villa wall; then great oaken pins were stuck in here and there, on the honest principle of not concealing the construction! Naïveté is charming, but this skittish affectation of it is annoying, "like an old ewe dressed lamb-fashion."

CHAPTER XXVII

COLOURED ILLUSTRATIONS & "MAKE-UP"

THE facility with which any work in colour can be reproduced by the three-colour process, whether intended for reproduction or not, has so popularized colour books that attention might again be paid by artists to a more selective and arbitrary treatment of colour than is absolutely necessary where practically any colour is mechanically reproducible. Admirable in some ways as the printing of Caldecott, Walter Crane, and Kate Greenaway books was, advance might be made along similar lines without greater elaboration, but by using colour with increased knowledge on the part of the artist of what is obtainable by equally simple means. For instance, by adopting a scheme in three printings, based upon black, a secondary and one primary, instead of as usually upon three primaries, the artist always working to a limited scheme in which was one dominant note of colour, rather than using the entire gamut both of colour and gradation, a more virile and not necessarily less delicate result would be obtained, and the disadvantages at present attendant upon the use of the three-colour process in the necessary use of glazed paper on mounts, the employment of fugitive inks, and the difficulty of finding any satisfactory solution to the problems of "bookmaking" out of such material would be done away with.

COLOURED ILLUSTRATIONS & "MAKE-UP"



No. 86. A. Boyd Houghton. "The Saint's Story."

An admirable example of his methods of line-laying and cross-hatching.

An illustrator is always called over the coals for the tiniest error, even though it happens to be in an abstruse matter of which only a specialist has knowledge. He should at least know what he doesn't know—this being

THE ART OF ILLUSTRATION

more useful than knowledge—but he should know how and where to find out. A general idea of most things with a capacity for rapid specialization is perhaps the most useful equipment; without endeavouring to burden the mind with an enormous mass of unrelated facts. But he should certainly have some knowledge of type and lettering, and be able to make some passable hand at designing a title page, or at least know enough to give a valuable opinion upon it; and the appropriateness or otherwise of the type to be employed in connection with his work.

He will find it a good plan to carry out any series of book illustrations to the same scale; all the drawings will then be reproduced in the same proportion, and unity of effect as the leaves are turned over will be maintained without patchiness. By this it is not meant that variety is not to be aimed at; but variety in bounds and in harmony. The reader of an illustrated book should not be called upon to change his focus, as though from a life-size portrait to a miniature and back again, as in a badly-hung picture show. In setting the scale of drawing, if he decides upon the smallest convenient size in which he can express the smallest object he considers essential to his subject, this will dictate to him, but if he expands the composition beyond reason he will find that what he began by considering an essential has ended by becoming insignificant.

“ Make-up ”

Frequently too little regard is paid to the make-up of an illustrated book, even by houses which issue considerable numbers of them. Almost every writer

COLOURED ILLUSTRATIONS & "MAKE-UP"

who says anything of the work of the 'sixties has his fling at the style of make-up of the pages and the terrible borders and head and tail pieces introduced by the printers of the time. In the book advertisements we read of "chaste designs in gold," or "superb binding," or "designs by Owen Jones," or "elegantly" or "richly bound in cloth from a design by John Leighton, F.R.A.S.," or "ornamental designs by J. Sleigh." These gentlemen, in order to have their names given equal prominence with the illustrators and engravers, must have reached a bad eminence in their trade ; but it shows that it was taste and not goodwill that was at fault. Accidentally I find an indication of the great care taken in printing in the case of *Home Thoughts and Home Scenes*, where the Houghton drawings and the letterpress are printed on one side only of a very stout plate paper, probably page by page. The sheets are all single and unfolded ; probably the paper was too stout to fold satisfactorily ; but their inner edges were attached to the binding by rubber solution, which allowed the pages to fall open comfortably enough until the rubber perished. There is evidence throughout of the most careful overlaying in order to render the full strength of foreground, and the delicate relations between middle-distance and distance that it would be natural for an artist working in pencil to express—a difference unattainable by the engraver, but to some extent possible to the printer. It is a pity that the *Arabian Nights* are not so finely printed on as good a paper, but at least these volumes don't come unstuck. I am unaware whether this method of binding was much used or not.

THE ART OF ILLUSTRATION

The point to make is not that the make-up of the books was bad ; on the contrary, much thought and skill were devoted to it, the pity being that the designers and craftsmen employed looked upon lavishness of decoration as what they were called in to supply, and they "threw their weight about" with curious results.

Nowadays these typographical matters have received a closer study than was the case in the 'sixties, and harmony of style between the different constituents of a book is better understood if not always acted upon.

It is not that taste has not improved in the matter of book production, but that the arrangement is frequently brought about haphazard without consultation between the partners to its production. It is everybody's business and nobody's business.

Harmony of illustration and type

The illustrator should know the weight of type with which his work will be associated, so that this, no matter what style of treatment is adopted, should not require the reader to change the focus of his eye as he looks from the type to the drawing and back again. Both should "read" evenly, and more particularly should this be a matter of study in the case where drawings are less than full-page and are surrounded by type. No drawing should require a magnifying glass, except in the case of a person of defective vision, either to execute or examine.

Simplicity of arrangement

Drawings, no matter what their shape, should be

COLOURED ILLUSTRATIONS & "MAKE-UP"
reproduced on "fool-proof" rectangular blocks, so
that no zig-zagging of type or eccentricities of the kind
can come near them.

Nothing is more irritating to the judicious than a
higgledy-piggledy scattering of illustrations about a



No. 87. A. Boyd Houghton. "Tom, Tom the Piper's Son."
A masterpiece of rhythm of line and opposition of light and dark, but the
wood-engraver has lost much of the subtlety of the original.

page of type. Yet art editors of magazines whose business
it is to see to these things are the worst offenders,
frequently asking for drawings not to be squared up,
but drawn upon a diagonal on purpose to be streeled
across the page, with step-ladders of type jagging into
the design above and below, or for "thumb-nail
sketches" to sprinkle in the margins. Authors must
hate such treatment of their work, as it is fidgetty to
read under such conditions, and a protest from them

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would add weight to that of the artist. An illustration should live comfortably with the type in full harmony, and never be allowed to detract from the bland dignity of the page, but by this treatment both the drawing and the letterpress are made to suffer under some mistaken idea that it is "artistic." It is not. All fanciful and eccentric treatments of this kind are abominations.

Illustrations for books should also be composed in such a way that they can be reproduced upright upon the page, so that it will be unnecessary to turn the book sideways to examine them. This is a great hardship for the artist to put up with at times, but his drawing must be a work of genius to compensate the reader for the irritation involved by the interruption to the general run of the work.

Unity of paper

From the point of view of book production, it is better for the illustrations to be so drawn that they can be printed on the same paper as the type. The senses both of sight and touch are offended by the intrusion of an occasional sheet of so-called "Art" paper, necessitated by the use of a half-tone or other type of block. The irritation is even greater if, as so often happens, this sheet becomes detached from the binding and falls out whenever the book is opened.

Much of the pleasure otherwise to be derived from books printed in the three-colour process is frittered away on this account, or by the nuisance of tissue paper; but where the print has been only partially affixed to a brown paper mount, and tissue paper also added, there is so complex a tangle of impediments to

COLOURED ILLUSTRATIONS & "MAKE-UP"
enjoyment that it says much for the artist if his work survives as a pleasure to the book lover.

Collotype and half-tone reproduction

If it is necessary to introduce pages of tone drawings independently into a work, collotype will be found to yield more artistic results than half-tones, if this can be arranged for, for two reasons. In the first place, it is not necessary to use the so-called "Art" paper, with its horrible surface, its blazing whiteness, its "crackability" on account of the amount of clay it contains, being more of a tile than a sheet of paper, and its ponderosity. Even this does not exhaust the list of disadvantages of this paper; for if a book, magazine or newspaper composed of this paper is allowed to get damp, it forms an almost solid brick; this has been known to happen to a whole cupboardful.

The other advantage of collotype is that it has not the mechanical dots and squares of a half-tone block that are so irritating to all but those who cannot see them.

The lights of a collotype are clearer than those of a half-tone, and its gradations more delicate, and in certain cases it is hardly distinguishable from an original drawing. This last can never be said of a half-tone reproduction.

CHAPTER XXVIII

AUTHORS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

THE literary man, and even editors sometimes, have strange notions of what is proper to the illustrator's function. It is an authentic fact that a well-known editor commissioned an artist to make a drawing "showing the British Possessions all round the globe by leaving out the shadows."

Dickens, as is well known, set great store by the illustrations of his novels, and perhaps this is not to be wondered at since the *Pickwick Papers* were begun as letterpress to accompany drawings; though this process was soon reversed. This method of writing up to drawings rather than making drawings to illustrate a text seems to have been fairly general until well into the 'Sixties.

In *Pendennis* we are told that Percy Popjoy had written some verses to illustrate one of the pictures which was called the "Church Porch." A Spanish damsel was hastening to church with a large prayer book; a youth hidden in a niche was watching this young woman. The picture was pretty, but the great genius of Percy Popjoy had deserted him, for he had made the most execrable verses which were ever perpetrated by a young nobleman. Pendennis tries his hand, on Warrington's advice, and turns out Thackeray's prettiest verses to the plate. Thackeray doubtless invented the occasion to work in the verses, but it appears to have been a common practice to write up to the illustrations.

AUTHORS AND ILLUSTRATIONS



No. 88. A. Boyd Houghton. "The Ladies Window in the New York Post Office," from "Graphic America."
Curiously dramatic vision of an everyday occurrence.

In *A Round of Days* (1866), in the *Advertisement*, the Brothers Dalziel say: "In some cases the Artist has illustrated the Author's poem; in others the Authors have shown themselves willing to portray in words the ideas conveyed in the Artist's original Designs."

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Among the writers who have obviously "written up to" the illustrations are Frederick Locker, Tom Taylor, and, I am inclined to think, Robert Buchanan, in a list that includes also Christina Rossetti, William Allingham, George Macdonald, the Hon. Mrs. Norton, and Tom Hood.

A famous case of a picture inspiring verses was that of Whistler's "Little White Girl," to which Swinburne was moved to write :

" White Rose in Red rose Garden
Is not so white."

which is interesting in so much as Whistler in the few drawings he made for illustrative purposes paid scant attention to the letterpress, and had as little to do with any extraneous interest as possible in all his art.

At present the usual course is for the Art Editor to hand over the MS. of a story to an artist whose work he regards as likely to be appropriate, leaving the selection of subjects to him, but giving any necessary information as to the space allotted and the time allowed. Drawings are not generally "written up to" unless they are of a topical or seasonal character, nor are they often accepted simply for their intrinsic interest. *The Yellow Book* had the idea of endeavouring to change this by printing drawings independently of text, but not many were drawn specially, artists using the quarterly rather as a vehicle, much of the work published, with the exception of Beardsley's own, being from pictures, etchings or studies not primarily intended for reproduction at all, and the same was the case with *The Savoy*. The idea was excellent, and it is a pity that

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it is not more acted upon. We have no publication at the present time with the spacious dignity of the *Portfolio*, under P. G. Hamerton, in spite of the comparative cheapness of modern methods of printing, paper and reproduction, compared with those in vogue in Hamerton's time.

CHAPTER XXIX

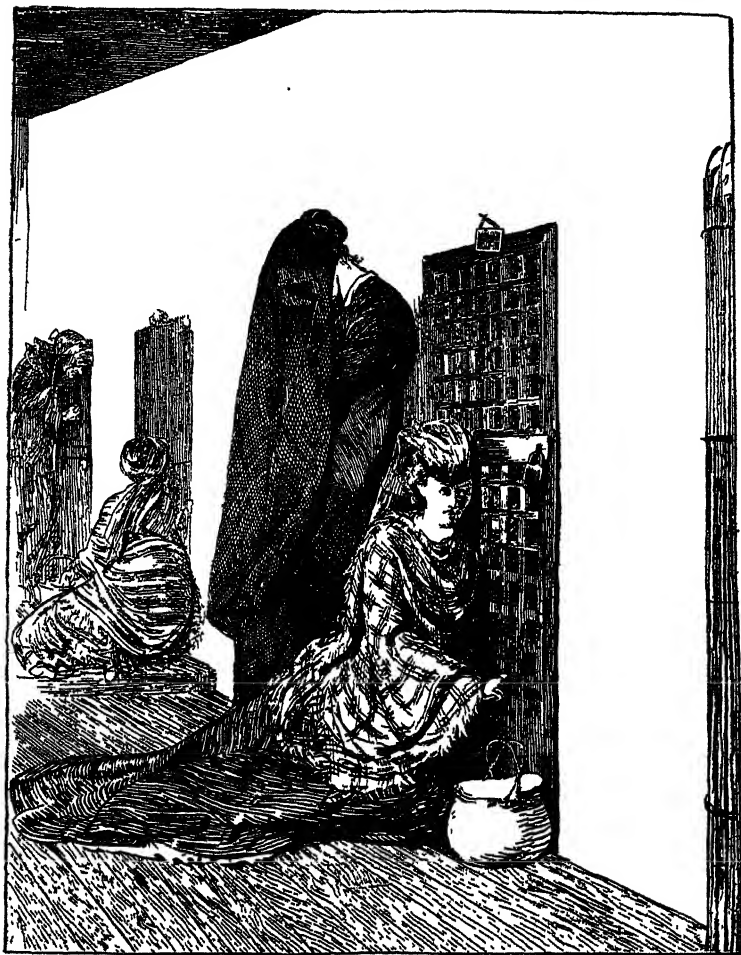
TRANSITIONAL TIMES AND OPINIONS

THE 'nineties was a time of rapid transition from an order that seemed to have set in like a wet night after a summer afternoon. The great Victorians, such as survived, had outlived their work ; but they still cast a shadow over their descendants so that these seemed to belong to a smaller generation.

Meredith and Hardy did not come into their own out of the shadow of the names of Dickens and Thackeray till then. Even Hardy had felt himself compelled out of deference to the public opinion of the time, as expressed by the Editor of the *Graphic*, if not to make a happy ending, at least to modify it, on the serial appearance of "Tess." Kipling had a stiff battle to fight against the ridicule of the elder men ; and he also had the same experience as Hardy with "The Light that Failed" on its appearance in serial form. Serious art that aimed at something more than simple entertainment or at showing life as anything but a smugly pleasant undertaking ending only in a beautiful death-bed scene was still supposed to show "tendencies" better suppressed.

It is somewhat sad, in going through the illustrated journals and magazines of the time, to remember and realize how much nerve and effort went to produce so much grey futility, particularly in the way of news supply, that is so much better done in every way now

TRANSITIONAL TIMES AND OPINIONS



No. 89. A. Boyd Houghton. "The Tombs," from "Graphic America."
Shows his sense of solidity of form, unobscured by vivid use of
significant texture.

simply by turning a handle, leaving the artist free to devote his time and thought to the production of things other than the mere making of records. By their

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exactness of observation and their skill in setting it down they had anticipated the later triumph of the camera and the cinema, which is now catching up and passing the artist who saw no higher aim than the making of an exact record of appearances, and who was hailed by the public as successful in exact proportion as his art approached the deceptive, like the policeman in wax at Madame Tussaud's.

It is strange to think that Whistler's work and not the wax policeman had till that time been resented as a practical joke by the public. In one case, they were deceived, and loved the deception: in the other they were annoyed because there was no attempt at deception. They did quite honestly look upon deception as the highest function of the artist, and blamed the artist for their own defect of vision. It was apparently a difficult time for the artist to be born into.

The attitude of the typical Victorian towards Impressionism was as antipathetic as that of later days towards Post-Impressionism, Futurism and Cubism, and can be illustrated by a true story.

Dr. Hislop had read a paper and shown slides at the Art Workers' Guild at Clifford's Inn Hall upon "The Art of the Insane," about the time of the exhibition of Post-Impressionist Art at the Grafton Galleries, and in the discussion following the two subjects were as thoroughly twisted into one as the strands of a cord, as though lunatic and Post-Impressionist were interchangeable terms. The Master of the Guild called upon Mr. J. W. North, one of the few survivors of the illustrators of the 'sixties. The back of my chair was gripped, and, turning round, I saw the venerable white hair and

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beard of the old artist as he dragged himself up and bent forward, his pink face blazing to crimson. "Sir," he began slowly, "I—think—I—had—better not trust myself to speak on this subject"—all the latter part



DELICATE ATTENTION

Smiling Spinner "I'M AFRAID THE SEA IS TOO COLD FOR ME THIS MORNING, MR. SWANSEN."
Smiling Man "COLD, NIP!" "LON BLIME YER I JUST FISH AND FOWLERS A KITTLE." "BLIME WAYER TH TO TAKE THE CHILL OFF WHEN I SEE YOU A CORRESP?"

No. 90. Charles Keene. From "Punch." Wood engraving.
 Characteristically expresses light and air in black and white in a manner
 unattempted before and unsurpassed since.

of the sentence coming out in one, like a single word of many syllables. As the Guild trooped out and down the old hall stairs I ventured my arm through his, and said: "Now, Sir—will you tell me what you would have said if you *had* ventured to speak upon the subject?" "My dear boy," he replied, "the poor men who did this work were insane, and ought to have been locked up, but"—and here we started going down the stairs, and the words came emphasized by every

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step, " the men—who got up—this show—were sane and ought to be—shot ! " And he meant it.

The air of the whole art world had become so stagnant that a good draught was needed to enliven it again, and nothing for many years had so much effect in London as the incursion of the Futurists, the Cubists, and the Post-Impressionists. The way had been prepared for them, so far as the Press was concerned, by Whistler, who even until about 1890 was the general laughing-stock. W. L. Thomas at the " coming of age " dinner of the *Graphic*, speaking of the new venture, *The Daily Graphic*, and of the young lion-cubs upon it, said that what it was proposed to put steadily before the public was " None of your Whistler ' effects,' " and there was unspeakable scorn in the accent on " effects," " but good, honest pen and ink," at which there was loud applause. At Christies' would be heard laughter and hisses when his works were put up—possibly organized by interested persons who could pick up " bargains " for a few guineas; works afterwards worth hundreds or thousands.

CHAPTER XXX

TRUTH TO LIFE

NO matter how untrue to life a story may be, the artist can dismiss this from his mind, and treat the characters as realities, not as puppets ; put life into them and contrive at least to give a picture of the period. There is a general lack of liveliness in our books and magazines as though the life of Britain supplied hardly more than two or three stock types of a theatrical order. Sometimes the impression is conveyed that the artist has thought it more important to render the crease in the trousers impeccably than the character of the young hero who wears them. The heroines are lacking in flesh and blood, and are often too concerned about being " ladylike " to be ladies. Our representation of foreigners must frequently be a source of irritation to them ; our Frenchmen and Americans are more absurdly unlike than are the stock presentations of the " Englishman " by French and American artists. The Irishman is still drawn in knee-breeches, with a pipe in his caubeen and a shillelagh sticking out of his pocket, and with a face like a monkey. As great a travesty is frequently served up of Scottish life.

No further away than Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens Mr. Punch would have us believe that any lady of distinction has a proportionate height of eight, nine, or ten heads ; and that London Society, apparently by lack of thought, has succeeded in adding two or three cubits to its stature.

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The Countryman is frequently drawn simply as a townsman wearing his clothes badly, rather than marked by any searched-for characteristic.

A milk-and-watery idealism has affected almost all



"NO ACCOUNTING FOR TASTE."

*Miss families (just arrived at Shropshire—the Children had been down a Month before). "WELL, JANE, HAVE YOU FOUND IT DULL?"
Nurse "IT WAS AT FIRST, M M THERE WAS NOTHING TO IMPROVE THE MIND, M M, TILL THE HICKERS CAME DOWN!!"*

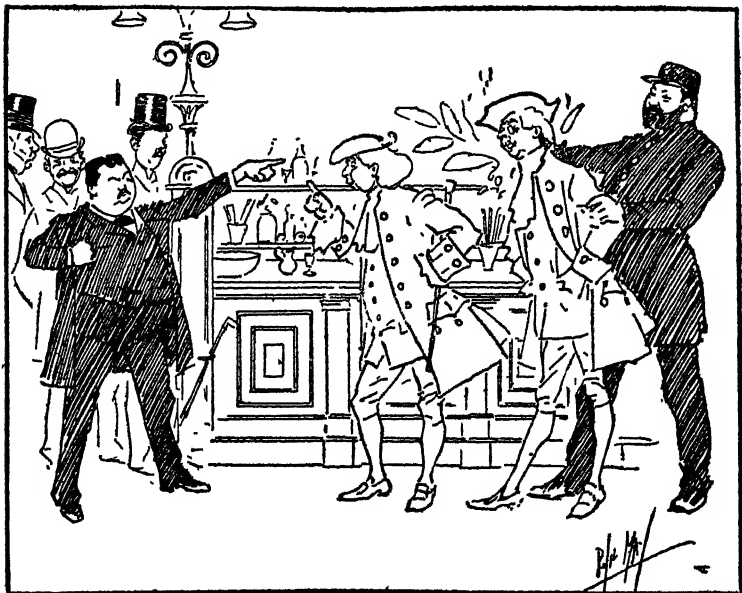
No. 91. Charles Keene. From "Punch." Notable for the art and artifice employed in detaching one group from another.

our efforts at the presentation of virtuous womankind ; we are given a sort of anæmic prettiness ; of other womankind the presentation is generally vulgar, as though to represent vulgarity it were necessary to draw vulgarly.

The illustrator lives too much in the studio. It is not meant that he spends too much time there, but that he does not carry the illustrator part of himself abroad sufficiently to see the people and the sights. Trollope said of Thackeray that he became lazy as he grew older, explaining that he meant, not that he didn't work as

TRUTH TO LIFE

hard at his desk as he had done, but that he didn't perpetually live with his characters. It is probable that much of the strength of Renouard's work in England, Ireland, and America arose from the fact that he had



No. 92. Phil May. From "The Parson and the Painter."
Direct "process" block.

to live by his eye so largely, as he spoke little or no English, and that it was thus only by the significance of types and appearances that a subject could make its appeal to him. Having no "parti-pris" he did not see what he went out to see, but what was there, with the result that he gave us a true and emphatic vision of life, arrived at not by means of caricature, but by careful selection and isolation of character. Each individual is a type, from his hat to his boots—even his clothes

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being characteristic of, and so part of the man ; and not, as is generally the case with an academy portrait, the clothes worn by a model, the head alone being characterized.

Where decoration is the primary aim intensity of characterisation is not so necessary, and a rhythmic style may be adopted if in harmony with the subject. It is possible to imagine Beardsley's drawings in connection with Swinburne's verse, while Dürer would seem halting and out of step. On the other hand, the style of Beardsley's drawings would have been entirely out of keeping with Walt Whitman's rough-hewn verse, while Dürer's forcible and spondaic method of characterisation would march with the same determined tread, and carry as much weight of content—or rather, more, from being packed in a more orderly manner—Whitman carrying his belongings strung about him after the manner of a tramp.

CHAPTER XXXI

BLAKE ON IMAGINATION

THE popular idea of imagination is of something vague, undefined and illogical, generally associated with stars, clouds, and rainbows, or the sticking of a pair of goose-wings on a pretty girl in white and calling the result an angel. This is a mistake. Imagination is not wool-gathering, but is a clear-minded and rational act, even though it may sometimes proceed by logarithm, so that it hops from a point of solid ground in a parabolic curve back to earth again in one burst of explosive energy instead of slowly pacing out the distance, leaving no traces of its flight.

No man more imaginative than Blake ever breathed, so that what he has to say upon the subject must have the highest value. What he set most store upon was definition ; and, no matter how indefinite his drawings may appear, there is no lack of lucidity or precision in his critical pronouncements. Following are some extracts, upon which comment is hardly necessary :

“ Art and Science cannot exist but in minutely organized particulars ” (Gilchrist, 235).

“ All that has existed in the space of six thousand years
Permanent and not lost : not lost nor vanished, etc.,
mere possibilities,
But, *to those who enter into them*, they seem the only
realities

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For everything exists ; and not one sigh nor smile,
nor tear,
One hair nor particle of dust—not one can pass
away."



No. 93. Phil May. From "The Parson and the Painter."
These drawings are remarkable as expressing in addition to character and movement, extraordinary detachment of groups in pure line, by means of perspective and slight variations of force.

A passage that might have suggested the core of Browning's "Abt Vogler," and later :

"For all things exist in the human imagination"
(Gilchrist, 237).

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“ O dear mother Outline, of wisdom most sage
What’s the first part of painting ? She said : ‘ Patronage.’

And what is the second to please and engage ?

She frowned like a fury, and said : ‘ Patronage.’

And what is the third ? She put off old age,

And smiled like a Syren, and said ‘ Patronage.’ ”

(Gilchrist, II, 132).

A common error to be controverted is that which looks upon pen drawing as “ sketching ”—in the sense of something slight and unfinished that an artist simply “ knocks off.” While, of course, there is no desire to magnify its difficulties or to claim any undue consideration of it as a craft or mystery, a too light-hearted view of it either by artists or the public does harm to both. Three of the most original artists England has produced devoted their lives entirely to pen drawing—Charles Keene, Phil May, and Beardsley. Yet all took the work itself with great seriousness, with the result that it will outlive the greater bulk of the much more pretentious work on canvas of their period ; and will always give pleasure not for its humour or content alone, nor as giving a wide outlook upon the world of their time, but by its intrinsic artistic qualities.

CHAPTER XXXII

EMOTIONAL QUALITY OF VISION

A CONSIDERATION that comes into the question of the content, as apart from the actual style and accent with which it is set forth, is how near it comes to the artist's own preoccupations. His setting out of this is likely to be passionate or impersonal in exact proportion to these preoccupations, and the artistic value of his work will depend largely upon the quality of this interest.

I remember seeing a painting by a policeman of his little kitchen sitting-room, with his wife attending to the cooking-range, where there was very little knowledge of craftsmanship, but a great deal of passionate devotion to the unlovely objects. The light on the varnished tile paper, the rows of cups on the dresser, the horrible cooking-range, and all the still-life of the place were in a simple way exquisite—and a certain unity was preserved by the simplicity of vision and patient consistency with which they had been represented. His skill had broken down with the figure ; but yet, the picture had a strange quality of naiveté that a more expert craftsman might have lost ; would have lost indeed, unless he could recapture the emotional quality such as Millais as a young man was capable of imparting to his rendering of fact.

There is indeed some quality of interest that is beyond the accurate and skilful presentation of facts.



No. 97. Léandre. A master of caricature. From "Le Rire."
Direct process block from chalk drawing.

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Whereas some will delight in their presentation (Meissonier, Menzel and William Small being good instances) who yet never reach beyond a matter-of-fact re-statement, there are others whose record could not be compared technically, yet which goes far beyond in some unanalysable quality of emotional intensity. If, for instance, the policeman had had a streaky marble mantel-piece in his horrible parlour, and had painted it, it is likely that his picture would have expressed an emotional value beyond Tadema. Why is this? It is the difference between a man and a machine, between art and craft. To carry out a work of art, Virtue must go out of the artist to inform his craftsmanship, whereas virtue does not issue from a machine, or from craftsmanship alone.

Art is like the involuntary muscles, and is in spite of us—succeeds or fails independently of will—but nevertheless responds to certain stimuli. If Art or Poetry could be taught, there is not an artist nor a poet alive who would not give it up, and play spillikins.

CHAPTER XXXIII

GREAT LITERATURE NOT NECESSARILY MORE INSPIRING THAN POOR

IT should be realized that Shakespeare's plays offer no finer opportunities to the illustrator than any other work of a dramatic character. It is true that in practice an illustrator finds stimulus to his art from his enjoyment of particular authors or passages. He may have a penchant for costume of a certain period, or for a particular type of character ; but if his literary sense should lead him into an endeavour to parallel what is after all the particular property of literature—the glamour and magic of words, he will certainly find one of two things—that he will fail ; or, if he succeeds, that he is a genius ; for the glamour and the magic of the words will have to be translated not only from one language into another ; but from one art to another ; an art, moreover, which, being static, is less allied with literature than are music, acting, and dancing.

The illustrator, as such, has little to do with the goodness or badness of the writer's work, though naturally he prefers a worthy author ; but this apart, the silliest magazine story may provide as good materials for illustration as Shakespeare's plays.

In the realm of ideas things are different. The quality of the ideas suggested by the writer is variable, and a silly or limited idea is hardly likely to call forth a passionate adherence or co-operation on the part of the illustrator.

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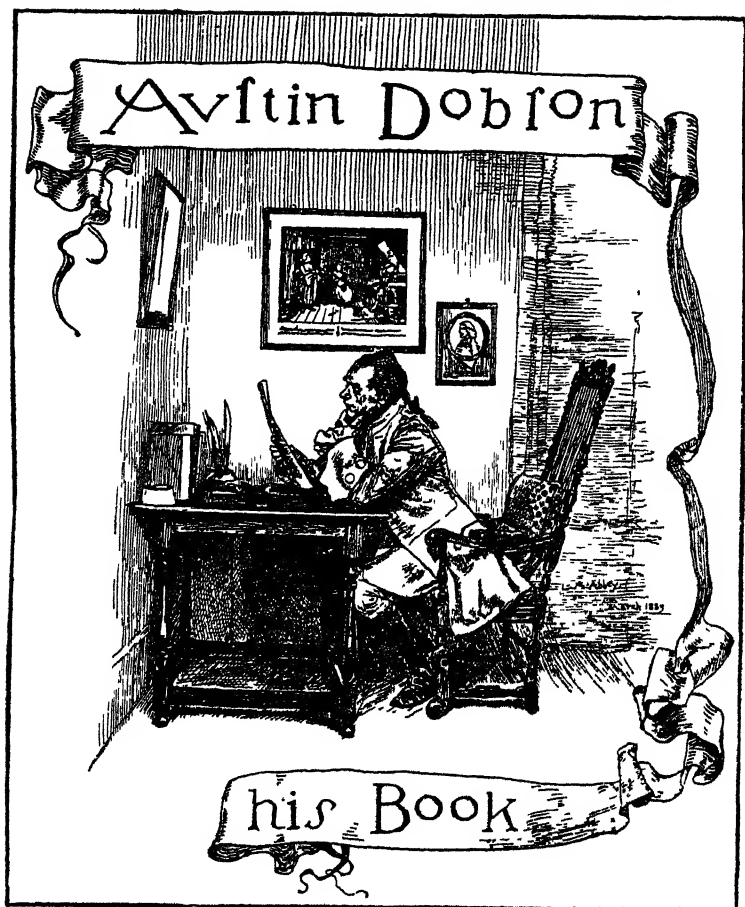
Heads and hands

It is good to remember that, no matter how poor and silly a little love story may be, no draughtsman should complain of a lack of opportunity for expression who has a head and a hand to draw. If the story suggests an interesting situation in which these may be employed in action, with some appropriate setting, an illustrator should require no more than this to set all his powers of invention and execution into full action. Hands are as full of character and show as great a variety of expression as faces, telling as much the story of a human life in heredity and circumstances as eyes, nose, mouth, chin, and forehead. They display both voluntary and involuntary movement—finnikin affectation, listlessness, violence, timidity, and every degree of grace and awkwardness in a more obvious manner pictorially than even the facial expression—yet no part of a drawing is more generally scamped than the hands, partly because of the trouble involved in the draughtsmanship, but also (a more serious cause) from lack of interest in them.

Feet

Even the feet are remarkably expressive ; and it is worth noticing what great amount of dramatic significance a drawing may derive from them. Some of Boyd Houghton's Arabian Nights series may be taken as examples—notably the drawing of The Envious Man plucking the hairs from the cat's tail—the meeting of the Prince and Badoura (where the passion of their embrace is expressed almost more by the feet than the lips)—the Bridegroom shut up in the Lumber Room—

INSPIRATION FROM LITERATURE



No. 98. E. A. Abbey. Process block, enlarged from wood engraving by Cooper. A masterpiece of delicate spacing of line work to preserve the lights.

where the feet are full of a chill fear—prophetic indeed of the war expression “cold feet”—and in the Death of the African Magician; where they play their full part in the composition of the silhouette, at the same

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time being extraordinarily expressive of the poisoned agony of the magician. There are many such cases in his work, and it would be easy to multiply them.

In Phil May's drawings much of the decorative effect is arrived at by the clear establishment of the feet upon the ground. There is always an emphatic silhouette, and the pose or relation of two or more persons of a group, and the relation of one group to another is always clearly observed and stated—this being as important a subject from the decorative point of view as the relation of heads in a group. Many accomplished artists overlook this factor in a composition, and hang the figures to the faces, instead of standing them firmly with their feet upon the ground with the head duly supported on top according to the generally accepted law of gravity.



No. 99. Beardsley. From "Under the Hill " Direct process block.
Delicately contrived pattern of tone and rhythm in a manner
reminiscent of the sciagraph.

CHAPTER XXXIV

NECESSITY FOR ACCURACY OF REFERENCE TO TEXT

THE illustrator should keep his text handy to refer to at all times, or he will fall into small errors of detail that ten members of the public will notice, ninety-nine per cent. of whom will write to the papers, the editors, and the publishers about, asking why so incompetent a person is allowed to exist. If he should represent a sirloin instead of a round of beef, as I once did in some illustrations to *Tom Brown's School-days*, he may share my experience—there was a long and angry letter published in the *Daily Chronicle* about it, which H. G. Wells, with whom I was staying, read out to me at breakfast. We danced round the table with delight—but the man was perfectly correct—it ought to have been a round of beef, and I am sorry that I offended “X,” the unknown gentleman. But in spite of all our care, an error sometimes slips in. The “S.Y. Vectis” happened to be mentioned in a short story which I was asked to illustrate in a hurry for a well-known magazine. We imagined the “Vectis” to be a real boat; and, at my request, the Art Editor rang up the P. & O. for any illustrated pamphlets or material they might have, so that the drawings might be accurate. Nothing came, and I wrote myself. Nothing came. The Art Editor wrote and I telephoned—and then—an avalanche of literature descended in two lots on each

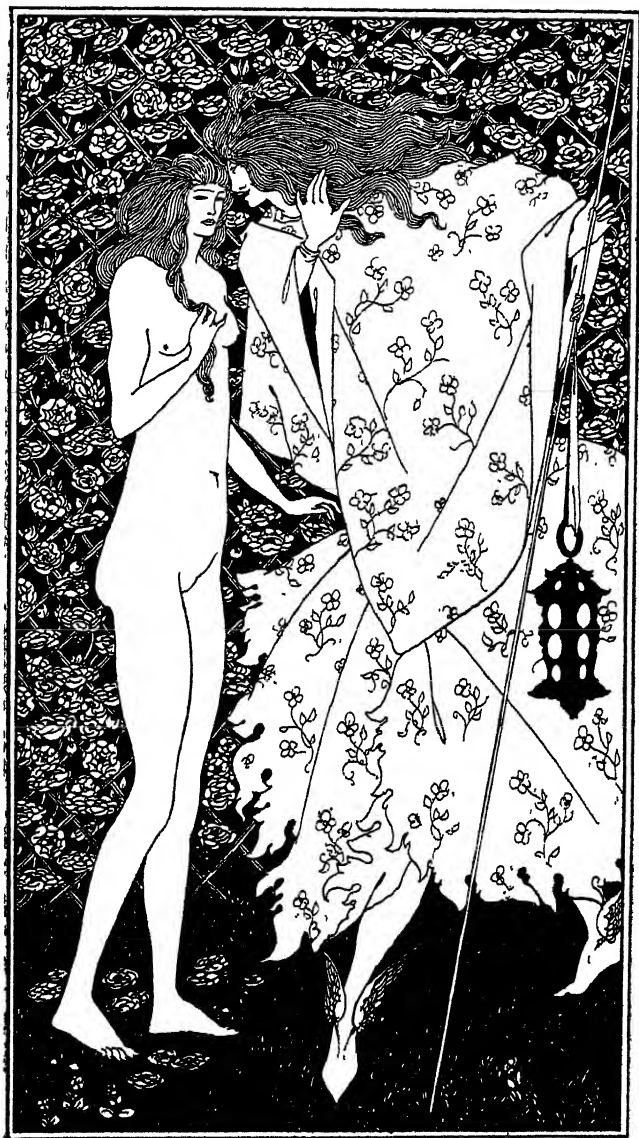


No. 100. Beardsley. From "The Rape of the Lock."
Somewhat put to it to detach his groups he manages by an artful
disposal of pattern.

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of us, all different—so that eventually I had a pile about eight inches high, but nothing quite to my purpose. However, we had done our best, and my hurried sketches appeared, finally, more hurried for the delay. I received a heavy rebuke from a clergyman at Ely pointing out that on a lifebuoy which I had introduced into the background I had put “S.Y. Vectis, London,” whereas her port of entry was Greenock. I was reminded of Whistler’s “Admission” in the “Gentle Art of Making Enemies,” when he had misspelt Piazzetta with one z and committed other enormities—“Who could possibly have supposed an orthographer loose! Evidently too *ung vieulx qui a moult roulé en Palestine et aultres lieux!*”

What it is to be prepared, though! *Atlas, mon pauvre ami*, you know the story of the witness who, when asked how far he stood from the spot where the deed was done, answered unhesitatingly: “Sixty-three feet, seven inches!” “How, Sir,” cried the prosecuting lawyer, “how can you possibly pretend to such accuracy?” “Well,” returned the man in the box, “you see I thought some d—d fool would be sure to ask me, and so I measured.”



No. 101. Beardsley. From "The Yellow Book."
Delicately luminous pattern.

CHAPTER XXXV

ILLUSTRATION OF MODERN PLAYS

IT is worth considering whether a better service might not be performed to Literature and Art, and the illustrator be better employed, if publishers were frequently to issue illustrated editions of modern plays. Many people find a difficulty in reading these, as they lack the objective dramatic sense, which is one of the simplest the illustrator can be called upon to supply. The *Dramatis Personæ* in themselves provide ample opportunity for character drawing; and even in the most conversational comedy of manners, it is likely that there will be found almost an excess of incident. Many unacted plays might by this means reach a considerable public; and those, either unsuited to the times or crowded out of the theatres, might find a permanent and acceptable form. It is probable that most of the best plays find no place upon the boards—and failing to do so, fail also of any chance of success with the book publishers, remaining for ever confined in the desk of the writer. The illustrator could remedy this by supplying the dramatic side, the action and the character that the public cannot, without the actors' aid, visualize for itself. Let the illustrator perform the actors' and producers' functions, and a quite large and increasing public might be found for a bulk of dramatic literature of a higher class than is usually to be seen upon the boards. The general dramatic taste would be



No. 102. Beardsley. From "The Yellow Book."
It is amusing to examine why this looks flat and the Nicholsons look solid.

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raised to a higher level, as its interest in, and better understanding of, dramatic literature was fostered, and our stage would be in every way strengthened. Authors now devoted to the novel form might be induced to write dramatically if they could feel sure of a reading public independently of stage production. The illustrator would not so constantly find himself treading the author's descriptive ground all over again ; for in the dramatic form all useless description of place, character, and costume is omitted. While such descriptive writing is frequently hampering rather than helpful to the artist, it is the lack of this that distresses the accustomed novel reader who picks up a play. This gap is better filled in by the illustrator than by the novelist. Usually a story is written without a view to illustration ; so that if it is so treated we have an almost inevitable redundancy. On the other hand, a play is always written with the actor in mind, whose place, if the play is unacted, the illustrator can fill with equal adequacy.

CHAPTER XXXVI

CHILDREN'S BOOKS

MUCH might be written, and has indeed been written, on the subject of illustrated books for children, but nothing more illuminating than the conversation recorded by Mr. Edward Johnston in an early number of *The Imprint*.

Children love lots of facts in a drawing, and their relation one to another is of little importance to them. Mr. Johnston's little daughter (*ætat* 8½) gave some illuminating replies in answer to his questions regarding the sort of pictures she liked—and then—to quote the dialogue that followed :

“ Myself (Mr. Edward Johnston) : I want to know another thing—not considering the things in the picture, but how do you like the pictures made ?

1st Daughter : How it's drawn, do you mean ?

Myself : Yes.

1st Daughter : Well, you just draw them don't you ? If you were going to draw a landscape you would probably draw a hill with a stream and a wood and then, if you were going to have little creatures running about, you would make rabbit holes in the hill, and you'd probably have at the end of the stream a pond, and then you might have a windmill on the hill. You might have a road coming down from the windmill—and the stream might come out of the wood.

On my suggestion the 1st Daughter began to draw

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her picture, and the 2nd Daughter (*ætat* 7) presently coming in (not having heard this conversation) answered my first question thus :

2nd Daughter : I think I like that sort of picture what Bridget's got there—I think I can draw that sort of picture.

Myself : Well, aren't there any others ?

2nd Daughter : I don't think I like any other pictures.

Myself (trying a leading question) : Don't you like animals ?

2nd Daughter : Well, in pictures like that I do have animals, you see. I like them sort of mixed up.

Myself : What do you mean ?

2nd Daughter : Well, you see, I'd make one like that and then make other things in it like bits of other pictures. . . .

1st Daughter : But don't you like other kinds of pictures ?—you put such an awful lot of things into one picture.

2nd Daughter : And that's what I mean by having it mixed up, and that's why—I like having a lot of things in one picture." (*The Imprint*, Vol. I, 2.)

The young lady of eight and a half appears to be a somewhat advanced critic on one point ; most people until their eyes begin to fail remaining in the condition of the lady of seven, and liking a lot of things " all mixed up " with bits of other pictures—a surfeit of content ; and as to the drawing—" Well, you just draw them, don't you ? " It is precisely in the arrangement and the drawing and the relation of its contents towards building up a pictorial unit rather than in the



No. 103. Beardsley. An example of beautiful spacing, in which the whites do not appear blank, and the white costume has a different value from the sky.

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individual parts that the artist's higher function lies. It is a pity that anyone should be content to remain untouched by what is capable of yielding so much æsthetic pleasure. Let them take a Japanese print almost at random and study with what a tremulous balance the scales are held between economy and lavishness of fact. The statement is complete ; to subtract a line would be parsimony, to add one superfluous—either would disturb the exactitude of the balance.

“ The world is so full of a number of things ” that it is beyond the capacity even of an industrious recorder who lives to ninety odd, like Menzel, to set down a tithe of what he sees. But to set down “ how ” you see any given thing, what pressure it makes upon the brain, or what kinds of thoughts and impressions it leaves or produces is to share out the mind with the world, even though the subject be nothing but a jam-pot upon a dresser.

CHAPTER XXXVII

THE PRINT ROOM

"A dream cometh through the multitude of business."

YOU hop off the 'bus at Mudies', the most famous circulating library in the world. You pause at their famous corner to glance at the display of the latest literature dressed up in its gaudy "jackets." You leave behind the roar of Oxford Street with its swift currents of life to and from the City; and turn up the quiet alley of Museum Street, slackening at the photograph shops whence Monna Lisa smiles side-long at the passer-by; or Rodin's Penseur glowers direct and forbidding. There across a street you catch a glimpse of the grey Museum with its iron fencing and gateways—shabby people saunter without disturbing the Cockney pigeons—a school of incongruous girls with a "forbidder" in spectacles comes out laughing into the sun as you enter with the vari-coloured oddments of the Heathen and Christian universe, who converge towards the enormous portico to be swallowed alive in this great Mausoleum where Old Time lies buried. Fashion is absent; "Le Dernier Cri" is unheard. Up the stairs or through the sculpture galleries you saunter, through the bronze ages, past the mummies of priests, priestesses and Royal personages, through the Greek and Roman rooms past the "vases of the best period"; and, after a turn round the "slopes" of selected prints

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No. 104. Woodcut. Key block from "Nicholson's Alphabet."
An effect of solidity is achieved by the merest hint of light and shade,
and the rounding-off of angles in the silhouettes.

and the display of Ming Dynasty and Rajput paintings, push past the unpretentious and silent swing door of the Print Room, where lies stored the summary of the artistic product of the world. A bell rings as the door

THE PRINT ROOM



No. 105. Woodcut. Key block from "Nicholson's Alphabet."

swings to, and mild-eyed old gentlemen with white beards look up from the portfolios like patient ruminant kine in a byre as you tread softly to your place to begin your spiritual adventure. Will it land you here—with them? Oxford Street, and life and its roar, and the

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novels of Mudies' in their jackets, and the photographs of the art of the world are but five minutes behind you. You take your seat, looking up now and again to change the focus of your eyes as the door swings and the bell tinkles. Was the City or is this the heart of things ? You become a quiet ruminant man.

Does Art present a refuge from life, a false hope softly indulged like a dream of heaven less than half believed ? The strenuous expression of our life lived at its keenest and hardest, a sensuous anodyne, a pastime, the " occupation of a man's leisure " ? An ornament only on the main structure, or the foundation and pinnacle of the spiritual life itself ? It is or ought to be all things to all men. The work of the illustrator makes its appeal to the swift life of Oxford Street outside, in the crude language of the man in the street, as also gently here to the passionless white-bearded men whose concern seems little enough with the ways of the City—who seem to have taken refuge from the vulgar elbows, to talk quietly with the wise and distinguished alone—to feel and see through other eyes and by other pulses in the highest communion with other minds, living their selfless lives ; modern monks, untouched by the crush outside their cloister, whose religion is Art.

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